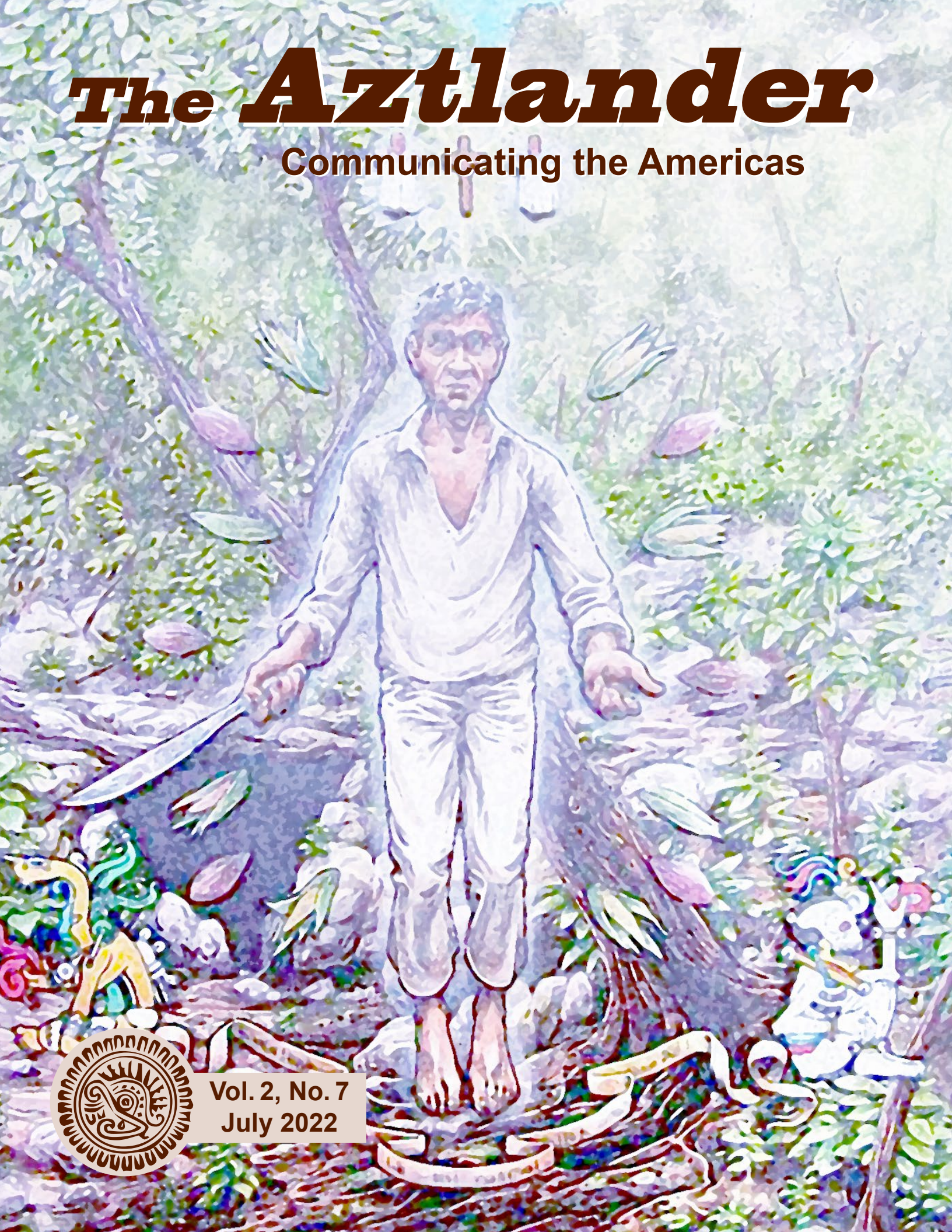


The Aztlander

Communicating the Americas



Vol. 2, No. 7
July 2022

Together,
we have you
covered...
Enjoy!

The Aztlander

Communicating the Americas

Welcome to *The Aztlander* !

Jam-packed with Scholarly Focus articles and up-coming zoom and in-person events!

***The Aztlander** is a free-flowing, hyperactive on-line publication designed with you in mind. Easy-to-read, with no formal contents; our cover design and highlight color will change each month. We welcome your feedback, comments, and suggestions!*

Contact **Michael Ruggeri** at this hyperlink: michaelruggeri@mac.com
or **Jim Reed** at this hyperlink: mayaman@bellsouth.net

If you are not already, let us know that you want to become an Aztlander subscriber!

Greetings Aztlanders! Welcome to your July issue of *The Aztlander*. We have a lot of good stuff to read and zooms we're announcing to keep you busy.

Monday, July 25 • 8 PM ET • 7 PM CT • July Aztlander Zoom:

"The Izapa Restoration Project Utilizing Virtual Reality and 3-D Animation"

with **Dennis R. Lisonbee**, with project members Cheryl Norman and Dr. Jason Jones.

Izapa is the ancient site where scholars believe the Maya calendars originated.

Read the full Aztlander live-streaming event program announcement, along with the zoom hyperlink, on the next page.



Our cover image this month is a stylized version of a painting shared on the "Belize Yucatec Maya" facebook page. Check these fine noble people out at: <https://www.facebook.com/Belizeyucatecmaya>

The Yucatec Maya, Cult of the Talking Cross, and the Caste War

During the nineteenth century, the Maya population of the Yucatan revolted against their Hispanic overlords who kept them in servitude. To many, the conflict is called the Maya Social war, but is more commonly known as the

Caste War of the Yucatan in 1847. The Maya had nearly succeeded in driving the Hispanics out of the peninsula, pushing them back to one final refuge, the city of Merida in the north of the peninsula. However, the Maya abandoned their siege of the city when the season for planting corn came.

That allowed the Hispanics to bring in new troops. With the new force, the Hispanics pushed the Maya back deeper into the jungle. When the Maya were losing the war, a miracle happened...

In that jungle setting, a cross dressed in a Maya *huipil* appeared and it is said that God spoke through it. The miracle of its speech inspired the Maya resistance. In time, a large church called the

Balam Na was built (partially with White captive labor) and the talking cross was moved there. From this jungle refuge, known as Chan Santa Cruz or the little Sacred Cross, the Maya operated autonomously, with their Maya state called Chan Santa Cruz and their capital Noh Kah Balam Nah Chan Santa Cruz. At its greatest extent, from the 1860s through the 1890s, the Chan Santa Cruz state encompassed all of the southern and central parts of the Mexican state of Quintana Roo.

During and after the war, many Maya rebels from the Chan Santa Cruz area went to Belize bringing with them the tradition of dressing crosses with a Maya *huipil*.

The Yucatec Maya (Masewal), who follow the Cult of the Talking Cross, are known as Cruzob Maya. The caste war ended in 1901 when the Mexican army took the Chan Santa Cruz capital.

The Maya continued their armed struggle until the 1940s when the last Maya groups signed a peace treaty with the Mexican state. Masewal means "Us" or "The People" and the term is still used by the Yucatec Maya in Quintana Roo (Mexico) and northern Belize.

Read David Bolles' article about the Caste War on the following pages.





The July Aztlander Zoom: **Dennis Lisonbee**

Monday, July 25, 2022 • 8 pm ET • 7 pm CT • 6 PM MT

Access and bookmark this zoom hyperlink: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81340762300>

“The Izapa Restoration Project Utilizing Virtual Reality and 3-D Animation” featuring **Dennis R. Lisonbee**

The Izapa Temple complex is one of the most uniquely preserved archaeological sites in Mesoamerica. Since its construction over 2000 years ago, the original mounds and stelae are still intact. As a result, more is revealed about the origin and rise of Mesoamerican civilization here than at any other archaeological site. This clear revelatory window into the past provides a foundation for understanding the origins and development of Mesoamerica's history, religion, and culture.

Izapa is where the sacred Maya 260-day (human gestation) calendar began with the Olmecs (ca. 1500 BCE) discovering the Sun Zenith passages at Izapa's 15 degrees north latitude occur 260 days apart – from August 13 to April 30 – astronomically defining this sacred “creation of man” calendar. At the Olmec decline (ca. 550 BC), a new group of migrants came and enlarged Izapa's complexes – continuing for nearly 1000 years to 400 CE.

In 1993, archaeologist V. Garth Norman and filmmaker Dennis R. Lisonbee began exploring emerging digital 3-D animation technology to restore the Izapa Temple complex in virtual reality. Time and cost made the task impossible. In 2010, technology breakthroughs made it possible to use the New World Archeology Foundation reports and topographical maps to explore the restoration. All the mounds of the complex, along with Stelae 8, 9, and 10 in Plaza B, were successfully modeled in low resolution and placed on Google Earth. Unfortunately, the cost and time of restoring all the mounds and monuments in high-resolution cinematic animation were still out of reach.

In 2020, breakthroughs in virtual reality gaming technology opened a new door to restoring the Izapa Temple Complex. In April of 2021, Norman and Lisonbee, with funding from the Ancient American Foundation, began restoring Plaza A and B mounds and stelae

*Stela 9
Summer Solstice Sunrise
alignment: A winged Sun
God carries a human spirit
on his back to heaven with
the summer solstice at
the time the sun reaches
its highest point in the
northern heavens.*

©2002 Ancient America Foundation.
(Do not use images without permission)



Stela 10: The child on Stela 10, awaiting birth, is gazing up into the heavens at the Venus morning star. The Diagonal glyph at top center completes the 260-day cycle that started with Stela 50. Two spirits attend her. (Do not use images without permission)

with entertaining, educational video content in a cinematic proof of concept.

The time and effort to create the Izapa Restoration proof of concept is successful; the Ancient American Foundation is now embarking on a fundraising campaign to restore Izapa. Industry professionals will use virtual reality gaming software, reflective light technology, and lidar to restore the Izapa Temple Complex in virtual reality. The restoration will include video games with content that will capture the imaginations of Maya school children; today's future leaders will be able to look to the past for answers to their future.

Meanwhile, view Dennis' video about the: [Izapa Restoration Project](#)



Aztlander Scholarly Focus: The Caste War Literature

by David Bolles and Antonia Poot Tuz

One of the marvels of the internet is that now material which formerly one could access only by going to the institution which held that material, is now available online. Such is the case with letters written in the Mayan language during the Caste War which began in the late 1840s. Two principal holders of these letters, the Hemeroteca of Merida, and the Princeton University Library, have made these letters available online. These letters are of great value because they allow us to get the Maya point of view of what happened during the Caste War.

As a bit of background history: In the late 1840s, there was a great uprising by the Maya against the Spanish-speaking overlords and became known, by the white people of Yucatan in any case, as “*La Guerra de Castas*” (“The Caste War”). The war began in late July, 1847, after one of the Maya leaders, Manuel Antonio Ay, was executed in Valladolid on July 26, 1847 for seditious activities.

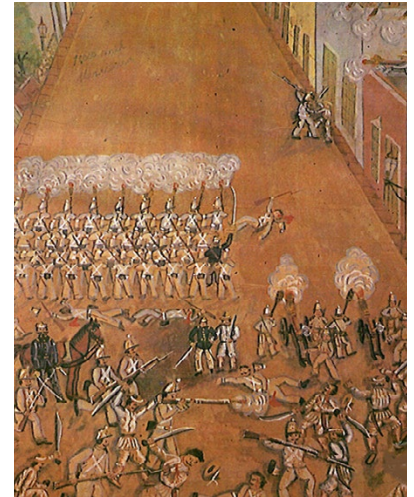
Some sources write that Ay was hung while others write that he was executed by firing squad. Either way, his execution brought about the open rebellion. In the letters written by the Maya during this period, one can get the sense of the various underlying reasons which caused the rebellion, but for us, more than any other cause, was the contempt in which the *Oulob*,¹ (the Mayan word for the whites and *Ladinos*), held the *Mazeualob*² (which was what the Maya called themselves). An example of this was the decree called “*Ley de 27 de Agosto de 1847, Restableciendo y Reglamentando las Antiguas Leyes para El Régimen de los Indios*” (Law of August 27, 1847, Restoring

and Regulating the Old Laws for the Governing of the Indians). This Law stated that the Maya were wards of the state without full rights of citizenship. Beyond this, in the Law there were various provisions which forced the Maya to pay more than the white

citizens in both fees charged by the state for services and taxation and for fees charged by the church for various rites. Given their economic situation relative to the white population, the Maya very much resented this inequity. They felt that all classes of Yucatecan citizens should pay the same amount and that requiring the Maya to pay more than the *Oulob* was unjust.

To set the scene from the historical perspective: the state of Yucatan declared its independence from Mexico (once again) on January 1, 1846. Maya support troops helped the rebel Yucatecans defeat Mexican general Matías de la Peña y Barragán on April 24, 1843, who then retreated with his army to Tampico via the Gulf of Mexico, leaving the Yucatecans to look to their own resources when it came to a local defense force. At about the same time, there were exploratory contacts with the United States to see if some form of union could be created. John Lloyd Stephens was in Yucatan and Central America as part of this exploration.

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Detail from 19th Century watercolor. Museo de la Ciudad de Merida.

¹ The word *oul* in today's Mayan language indicates that the person is from the upper level of the Yucatecan social order and usually is the owner of some wealth. In Juan Pío Pérez's *Diccionario* which was compiled about the time these letters were written there is this following entry: *Oul: forastero, extranjero; actualmente se dice del europeo ó su descendiente; equivale á español*. In the *Calepino de Motul* which was written during the last two decades of the 1500s into the first decade of the 1600s, there is this entry: *Oul: extranjero de otro reino*.

² The word *mazeual* comes from the word *maceualli* in the Nahuatl language and refers to a lowly class of person, but when used by the Maya, it refers to themselves. In Quintana Roo and into northern Belize, it continues to be used to designate a person who considers himself to be Maya. Throughout the letters presented here, this word is variously spelled *maceual*, *maseual*, *masegal*, and *mazeual*. See Molina 1571: *Maceualli. valallo*.

***David Bolles** is a longstanding Maya scholar of renown and a specialist in the language of the Yucatec Maya. Antonia Poot Tuz is a co-worker and exhibit guide at the Museo de la Guerra de Castas in Tihosuco, Quintana Roo, Mexico. See David's extensive list of publications at: <http://davidsbooks.org/>



Aztlander Scholarly Focus: The Caste War Literature

by David Bolles and Antonia Poot Tuz *continued from the previous page*

After independence from México, the Maya, due to the help they provided during the war for independence, were hoping for better treatment by the white population. However, they were disappointed in their expectations and rebelled against their treatment by the whites with some of the Maya rebel leaders envisioning an independent Maya state.

It should be mentioned that governmental affairs in Yucatan were in a terrible state of disarray with changes in governors happening frequently, at one point even within a month. Thus, when the Maya began their uprising due to the execution of Manuel Antonio Ay and further due to the attempt by the Yucatecan government to capture other Maya leaders such as Jacinto Pat and Cecilio Chi, the whites were busy fighting amongst themselves. Added to this was the Mexican-American War (April 25, 1846 – February 2, 1848) which was still going on when the Maya rebellion began. Even if the Mexican government was willing to, it was in no position to aid the Yucatecan government in its fight against the Maya. The combination of these circumstances allowed the Maya to take control of large sections of the then state of Yucatan which was comprised of what today are the states of Campeche, Yucatan, and Quintana Roo.

Because of the initial successes of the Maya offensive, by early 1848, the Maya forces were in control of much of what was then the greater state of Yucatan with only the areas around Merida, Campeche, and Ciudad del Carmen still under the control of the Yucatecan government. On March 25, 1848, the governorship passed from Santiago Méndez Ibarra, who had a decidedly negative view of the Maya and under whose governorship the Law of August 27, 1847 was enacted, to Miguel Barbachano who showed a willingness to work with at least certain factions of the Maya, especially with Jacinto Pat with whom he was well acquainted. This change of governorship was soon followed by the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab* which met many of the demands that the leaders of the Maya revolt had put forward. With the signing of the *Tratados* on April 23, 1848, the first phase of the Caste War was concluded.

The *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab*

April 23, 1848

As Seen Through the Caste War Letters

In the Hemeroteca of Merida, there is a collection of letters written in Mayan which resulted in a peace treaty



Miguel Barbachano y Tarrazo
(September 29, 1807 – December 17, 1859)
5 times Governor of Yucatan

signed in April 23, 1848. This treaty is known as *Los Tratados de Tzuc Cacab*, Tzuc Cacab being the town where the peace conference was held. In the lead-up to the signing of this treaty, there was a substantial amount of correspondence between the members of the Yucatecan government, principally Miguel Barbachano, who during these negotiations became governor of Yucatan on March 25, 1848, and rebel Maya leaders.

One of the early rebel leaders was Jacinto Pat, a Maya hacienda owner from the area of Tihosuco,³ who was apparently well educated and before the beginning of hostilities was an acquaintance of Miguel Barbachano. It has been stated that Pat was well

continued on next page

³ The name of this hacienda is Culumpich. It lays some 16 km. southeast of Tihosuco. The hacienda is presently in ruins, but various building can be seen and the purpose to which they were built can be ascertained. There is also a Precolumbian complex within the walls of the hacienda with the highest mound being some 10 meters in height.



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read and among other works had read Cogolludo's *Historia de Yucathan* which gave him a sense of the history of the Maya since the conquest by the Spanish in the mid-1500s.

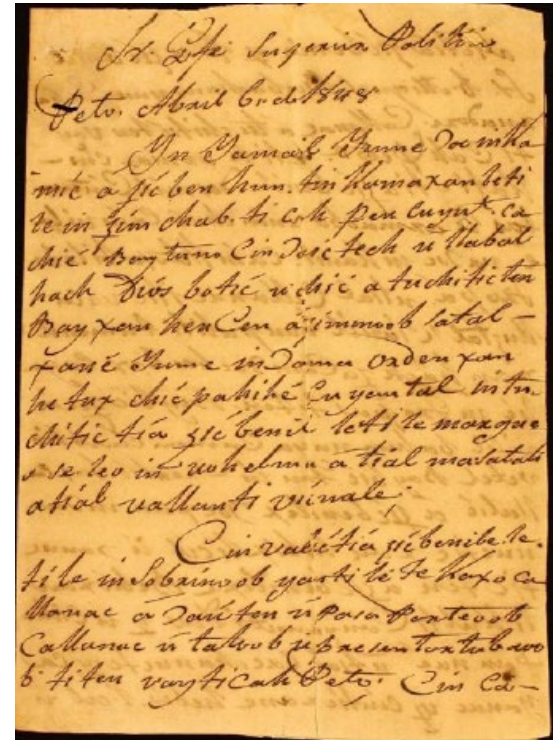
Even before becoming governor, Barbachano was making peace overtures to the Maya rebels and on February 17, 1848 sent an open letter to the rebel Maya leaders asking for cessation of hostilities. Apparently, Pat did not immediately respond to this letter, so on March 1, 1848, Barbachano sent another letter to Pat directly asking why he did not respond. Then on March 18, 1848, Barbachano sent a letter to Jacinto Pat which was a preliminary draft for a peace treaty, in Mayan. On April 1, 1848, Jacinto Pat sent a letter to the governmental representative Felipe Rosado, apparently a close friend of Pat's, acknowledging the receipt of letters from Felipe Rosado, Miguel Barbachano, and the priest José Canuto Vela, yet another acquaintance of Jacinto Pat. These letters were the beginning of negotiations between rebel Maya leaders, including Pat, and a commission formed by the Barbachano government which resulted in the Treaty of Tzuc Cacab.

Perhaps one of the best examples of the type of relationship Pat had with the government officials is to be found in a pair of letters he wrote to Rosado on April 6, 1848 (at right). In one of the two letters, Pat talked about trying to find Rosado's horses which were lost among other personal matters. In the other letter, he talked about setting the conditions for the eventual meeting. Apparently, Pat felt that political business and personal business should not be part of the same letter.

Some Observations About the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab*

As mentioned above, on March 18, 1848, Barbachano sent a letter to Jacinto Pat giving an outline of what he thought should be in the *Tratados*. By comparing the *Articulos* given in Barbachano's letter with the *Articulos* given in the *Tratados*, one can see that even though the Barbachano letter gave the *Articulos* in Mayan, that some of these were translated into Spanish and used in the Spanish version of the *Tratados*. One has to wonder therefore whether much of the original work on the *Tratados* was done in Mayan. Unfortunately, there is no indication that this was the case, nor is any version of the *Tratados* in Mayan available at this present time.

Articulos 1 through 3 dealt with the main reasons the Maya were rebelling, namely equity in contributions to the state and ecclesiastic entities and the free use of unclaimed land and of communal township land for farming.



First page of a letter from Jacinto Pat to Felipe Rosado, April 6, 1848.

One item of particular interest in the *Tratados* is *Articulo* 6 which was not given in the March 18 letter. In this *Articulo*, Jacinto Pat is put in charge of being the governor over the leaders of the various rebel Maya factions and answerable directly to Barbachano. This may have been the undoing of Jacinto Pat and the reason why he was assassinated in September of 1849.

The Duplicitous Nature of the Negotiations

Unfortunately for the Maya, the duplicitous nature of these negotiations by the Barbachano government is to be seen in a letter that Joaquín Gutierrez de Estrada sent from Campeche on April 26, 1848 to Commodore Matthew D. Perry who was stationed in Vera Cruz.

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"The Governor, Barbachano, has commenced a treaty of peace with an Indian chief called "Pat" who, it appears is at feud with another principal chief called "Chi". The object which the governor has in view is to create dissensions among them... Our only object is to gain time".⁴

The Withdrawal of the Maya Troops

While not based on any hard evidence, our assessment of what happened is that having gained the points for which he led the uprising by the signing of the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab*, Jacinto Pat, who was the leader of one of the larger armies of Maya soldiers, let it be known to his soldiers that the *Tratados* were favorable to the demands of the Maya and thus they were now able to return to their homes to get back to the task of eking out a living.

Other scholars assess the situation differently, some even using words like "miraculous" to describe the Maya withdrawal, but seen in the context of the *Tratados* and also the timing of events, it would seem that a more sensible conclusion is that the Maya felt that they had won what they were seeking and saw no need for prolonging the siege. Certainly, people like Cecilio Chi had a different agenda which was the annihilation of the white populous in Yucatan, but for Pat, being a business man with various dealings with white people for the products of his hacienda, the wiping out of the white population was definitely not in his interest. Besides, as can be seen in some of Pat's letters, Pat had close ties, perhaps one could say even friendships, with some white people. Unfortunately for Pat, it appears that he did not take into account the duplicitous nature of the negotiations as mentioned above, and that the white negotiators were only looking for a way to gain time in order to alter the outcome of the war.

To further bolster the conclusion that the Maya withdrawal was based on the perception by the Maya that they had gained what they were looking for in the war against the whites, it should be remembered that *Artículo 9* of the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab* stated that the belligerent forces should disband upon the signing of the *Tratados*.⁵ Whether for this reason or for other reasons posited by various authors on the subject of the Caste War, the Maya troops eventually withdrew from



Battle in a Maya village; detail from a 19th Century watercolor. INAH, Merida.

their positions around Merida and Campeche and went back to their respective homes.

The Case Against *Comisionado* José Núñez

Or a Good Example of the General Confusion Among the Ranks

In the Archivo General del Estado de Yucatán there is a group of letters written in the Mayan language which were used in the court marshal of José Núñez. An example of the general confusion which reigned in the Yucatacean government during this period is the case against *Comisionado* José Nuñez.

Once the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab* were signed Gobernador

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⁴ For the interested reader, see the full text of this letter that is given on page 1131 of "Documents Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States..., Volume 31". For further notes and views of what was happening in Yucatan at this time, see the final 30+ pages of Volume 31 which has various pieces of correspondence about the situation, almost always referring to the Maya in a very negative light by using such words as brutal stupidity, savage ferocity, rebellious savages, hordes of barbarians, and barbarous murderers.

⁵ 9º Cuando el Excmo. Sr. Gobernador D. Miguel Barbachano ponga con su secretario la ratificación de los tratados que contiene la presente acta, para que tenga todo el valor necesario, se retirarán con igualdad todas las fuerzas beligerantes a sus hogares, quedando solamente aquellas que sean necesarias para que cuiden el orden en sus respectivos pueblos, y que se restablezca la paz y tranquilidad en ellos.



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Barbachano wanted to have a liaison officer who would work with Jacinto Pat. Barbachano chose José Núñez who was, among other things, a *compadre* of Jacinto Pat and thus presumably had a good working relationship with him. As stated above, upon signing of the *Tratado* in April 23, 1848, Jacinto Pat became the lieutenant governor over the various factions of the Maya. While there is no notice of how soon thereafter José Núñez received his commission from Barbachano, by April 28, Jacinto Pat sent out a note to his various captains asking for safe conduct of Núñez.

On May 22, Núñez was apprehended in the garrison of Te Kaax⁶ by government troops and brought to Merida to stand trial for treason. The initial request of the prosecutors was for execution, but finally with the intervention of Barbachano, who, as pointed out in the court filing, had chosen Núñez to begin with, the sentence was reduced to six years in prison. Why Núñez was not acquitted by the time the report on the court marshal was written is difficult to understand, but it shows something of the general hysteria which permeated of white society at the time. Added to this, there was general confusion and factional infighting amongst the various parties in the white community which goes a long way to explaining how the Maya were able to mount such a successful campaign against the white population.

There is one item worthy of note in two of the letters presented in the trial. In these two letters, there are reports about the sacking of the town of Mani in the first days of May, 1848. Both of these letters were written on May 5, 1848. One letter was written in Mayan by Manuel Can who was the captain of the garrison at Te Kaax. The other letter was written by Pat's friend Felipe Rosado, now also a *Jefe Político* in the Barbachano government. Manuel Can is very explicit about the fact that the Culoob were the ones who sacked Mani whereas Rosado assumes the official line that Cecilio Chi was responsible. In the histories written about the Caste War, Chi is named as being the person responsible. However, as one reads through the Mayan letters, one has to wonder who really was responsible for much of the violence.



The *Guardia* lined up for Review.

Certainly, among the reports issued by commanders of state militias in the field, there is mention of the fact that their troops raided Maya villages in order to gather corn. Thus, there can be little doubt that in some cases, if not most, the Culoob were the aggressors.

Aside from the letters mentioned above, from 1849 through the early 1850s, there are letters written by local Maya town officials to people who supposedly had some influence with the government, especially the appointed peace commissioners, about how the treaty was being broken, mainly by minions of the Culoob who continued to raid Maya towns and kill and pillage the Mazeualoob.

Comisión Eclesiástica de Paz (Ecclesiastic Peace Commission)

With the signing of the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab*, a commission was formed to oversee the terms of the peace treaty. As mentioned previously, the priest José Canuto Vela was the president of this commission. Apparently, there were three regional sub-commissions, each with three members. The most active of these, if the Mayan letters are any indication, was the sub-commission for the North, which was located in Valladolid. Early on, the Maya seemed to have put their faith in the ability for these commissions to intercede on their behalf, but by the end of 1850,

continued on next page

⁶ In Spanish, this town is referred to as Tekax, but in Mayan, it is referred to as Kaax = forest. In Spanish, the locatives *te / ti* are appended to Mayan place names: eg. Tiho, Tihosuco, Ticul, Tecoh, etc. The corresponding Mayan names are Ho, Ho Tzuc, Cul, and Coh.



Aztlander Scholarly Focus: The Caste War Literature

by David Bolles and Antonia Poot Tuz *continued from the previous page*

letters to these commissions seem to have stop, perhaps indicating that the Maya lost faith in these commissions to be able to do anything to control the violence.^{7,8}

The Caste War Flares Up Again

If the various letters written in Mayan are any indication of what was actually happening, after what appears to be a lull in belligerent activities for a while after the signing of the *Tratados*, the Caste War flared up again. While it is tempting to attribute this lull to the governorship of the Maya by Jacinto Pat under Miguel Barbachano as specified by *Artículo 6* of the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab*, there may be a number of contributing factors. In any case, viewed as a traitor to the rebel Maya cause by some of the Maya leaders, Jacinto Pat was assassinated in the town of Holchén near Bacalar in mid-September, 1849, by another rebel leader, Benancio Pec.⁹

The Violence Continues

At about the time Pat was assassinated, the Mayan letters indicate that there was the resumption of active warfare which forced many Maya to retreat from the more populated zone of northwestern Yucatan to what is now Quintana Roo in order to escape the transgressions of the marauding troops under the direction of the white population.¹⁰

Those Maya who retreated to Quintana Roo brought with them the political and religious structures which they had gotten used to over the centuries under Spanish colonial rule and so as they began to reorganize themselves in their new homeland these political and religious structures were recreated, although this time with Maya themselves being the heads of these organizations.

The Town of Chan Santa Cruz

One of the most important towns to grow both politically and religiously during this period of reorganization was

⁷ The regions were called *Norte* (north), *Oriente* (east) and *Sur* (south). The North commission was located in Valladolid and the commissioners were José Gregorio Gala, Antonio García, and José Nicolas Baeza. A search for explicit information about the East and South commissions has not been fruitful. There is also mention of a commission for the Chenes region which is east of Campeche.

⁸ The last letter to the commission was written on April 13, 1850, from José María Barrera to José Canuto Vela.

⁹ There exists a letter written in Mayan which indicates that there was an apparent relationship between Benancio Pec and Miguel Barbachano. This raises the possibility that Barbachano colluded in the assassination of Jacinto Pat.

¹⁰ It should be remembered that part of the spoils of war which the marauding troops operating under the orders of the white population took were Maya captives who, because of a governmental decree issued on November 6, 1848, could be treated as prisoners of war and who were thus subject to being sent to Cuba as slaves.



Modesto Méndez Guerra
(February 24, 1801 – April 7, 1862)
Corregidor del departamento de El Petén.

Chan Santa Cruz, originally named Kan Pokob Che and today called Carrillo Puerto. It was here that the cult of the “Talking Cross” was established. In 1850, this “Talking Cross” issued a proclamation exhorting the Maya to continue their struggle against the Dzuloob. Fairly quickly a governmental center for the independent Maya was set up at Chan Santa Cruz, mostly under the leadership of José María Barrera. However, there was quite a bit of squabbling amongst the various Maya leaders and splinter groups tried in various ways to avoid being drawn into the larger conflict. It should be noted that the assassination of Pat was a prelude to a continuing problem which faced Maya leaders throughout the Caste War, with most of them dying a violent death due to power struggles.

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***Aztlander Scholarly Focus:* The Caste War Literature**

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The *Tratados de Paz de Chichan Ha*

August 21, 1851

One such group seeking refuge from the in-fighting had moved to Chichan Ha, one of the most southern towns in the then state of Yucatan, and close to the borders of Guatemala and Belize. They wished to be no longer part of the conflict and were hoping to have their area become part of Guatemala, thereby falling under the protection of the Corregidor of the Department of Peten, Modesto Méndez. Méndez had close ties with Barbachano and on August 19, 1851, along with the priest Juan de la Cruz Hoil, arrived in the village of Chichan Ha to see if some agreement could be arrived at. Méndez managed to convince the people of Chichan Ha that they should remain as part of the state of Yucatan. After two days of negotiations, the *Tratados* were signed and on August 27, and the *Tratados* along with a cover letter, were sent to Barbachano. On September 16, Barbachano issued a written address, apparently in Mayan, asking the remaining rebel Maya to join with the people of Chichan Ha in accepting the rule of the Yucatecan government once again.

Unfortunately for the people of Chichan Ha, José María Barrera was not pleased to hear about this *Tratados de Paz* and promptly marched on Chichan Ha with about 500 men, pillaged the village and captured their leader Angelino Ytzá who was taken back to Chan Santa Cruz.

As in the case of the *Tratados de Tzuc Cacab*, it appears that the *Tratados de Paz de Chichan Ha* were written in Spanish. However, the priest José Antonio Garcia, in a letter to José Canuto Vela dated October 2, 1851, stated that he had copies of the *Tratados* translated into Mayan and distributed in the area east of Valladolid, in an area where there was still a certain amount of feeling for an independent Maya state.

Two years later on September 16, 1853, the leaders of the people of Chichan Ha, José María Tzuc and Andrés Zima, signed yet another peace treaty, but this time with Belize. Even so, because of its location making it one of the way stops for transporting commerce from Belize to Yucatan, Chichan Ha continued to be assaulted by the Cruzoob and eventually the remaining people moved further south into the territories of Guatemala and Belize.

The Last of the Caste War Letters

For reasons which can not be explained, the last available letter written in Mayan during the Caste War was written on May 12, 1866. There is also a gap in available letters between 1857 and 1864 when Maximilian sent out a proclamation in Mayan telling the Maya that they must submit to being governed by the Mexican Empire. After that, there were another dozen letters and then silence.

To see the collection of letters which we have managed to gather together, go to:

<http://davidsbooks.org/Tratados.pdf> ■

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Noteworthy Posts in the News: Maya

Theobroma Species and Varieties of Native Cacao, by Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth
from www.maya-ethnobotany.org

We have been studying Maya cacao for over 40 years. These photographs are in the photo studio at the FLAAR Mesoamerica headquarters, Guatemala City.

Cacao of Guatemala (and surrounding countries of Central America) comes in different species, different surface texture, different colors: each kind of Maya cacao for great chocolate of different flavors.

Normally this kind of “cacao” is in the western hills of the Maya Highlands (**Fig. 1**). We have also found thousands of this species in groves all around remote areas of Alta Verapaz. We have been driving thousands of kilometers each year to reach remote areas to find and photograph (in high resolution) the different colors and surface texture of different *Theobroma* species (and different varieties) of cacao. You might enjoy exploring these cacao orchards with us; all are around homes of local people.

I was totally surprised to find this species in the Maya Lowlands (literally near sea level).

The chemicals from this pod are used to treat other plants to cure them (it releases so many chemicals we have to open the window of the studio and shut the door so the gasses don't spread throughout the entire office).

This is cacao from a Maya home garden (**Fig. 2**). The home owner kindly donated the cacao pod so we could bring it back to our photo studio to use lighting to show you the true structure of the surface. Other pods are smooth as silk: we are finding lots of different surface textures. As soon as a donation of funding is kindly sent, we will return to the village with a portable studio and photograph each size, shape, and color up in the tree.

Maya *Theobroma* Cacao Pods Come in Many Different Surface Textures

We have been studying cacao of the Maya since doing photography for Sophie Coe and Michael Coe's book on chocolate and cacao many decades ago. I drove all the way to Tabasco to do photographs for this book (in all three editions). I have also photographed cacao



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

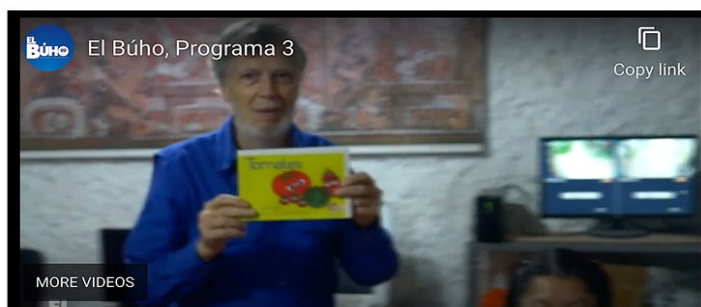
in the Soconusco area of Chiapas and throughout Guatemala. We have photographed *Theobroma bicolor* (*pataxte*, *balamte*) in the Maya Highlands of Guatemala.

In early June, we did a lot of photography of Maya cacao pods of diverse sizes, shapes, colors, and surface textures. Here is one pod (**Fig. 3**): lots more shapes to come in future FLAAR Reports.



Fig. 3

Spanish Interview at El Búho with Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth



Dr. Hellmuth speaks about some of his wide experience in Guatemala, FLAAR Mesoamérica, and MayanToons. Scroll down at www.maya-ethnobotany.org



INAH Uncovers Thousands of Aztec Wooden Objects and Offerings at the Templo Mayor

INAH has uncovered 2,500 wooden objects at the foot of the Templo Mayor in Mexico City. INAH says they have found masks, headdresses, scepters, pectorals, darts, figurines, dart launchers, earrings, jars, and numerous wooden offerings that the priests deposited to consecrate the site to the Aztec gods.

The objects have survived due to the anaerobic conditions in the soil and the high level of humidity that has persevered them for more than 500 years. The researchers applied modern methods of conservation in which the finds were stabilized using synthetic sugars (*lactitol* and, later, *trehalose*) which prevents the breakdown of the wood by microorganisms and fluctuations in relative humidity.

The finds are then rinsed in water and placed inside a heat chamber with temperatures of 50°C. This slowly dries the wood and allows the controlled crystallization of sugars that generates a thickening of the cell walls at a microscopic level.

Many of the objects have traces of colors such as blue, red, black, and white pigment on the surface.



One of the wooden artifacts. Image credit: Mirsa Orozco – INAH.

Excavations of the ritual deposits have also uncovered botanical remains such as flowers, birds, mammals and marine animals, sea cucumbers, copper and gold objects, and flint and ceramic pieces.

Heritage Daily has the report here: [Offerings at the Templo Mayor](#) ■

Chiapas Researcher Raphael Tunesi Murdered in Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico

The Maya researcher of Italian origin Raphael Tunesi was shot to death in the city of Palenque, reported the Chiapas Prosecutor's Office, which began an investigation to find the whereabouts of the murderers. Tunesi lived in Palenque, where he studied the glyphs on Maya stelae, mastered the Cho'l language and had written

several books about culture who settled in southern Mexico. Along with his activity as a researcher, Tunesi owned two hotels in Palenque, one of them qualified as a boutique.

The author of "*Mesoamerica: Olmecs, Mayas, Aztecs: The great civilizations of the New World*" and "*L'arte maya*", he was killed outside the La Escriba school, where he had come to pick up his children. The investigator was traveling in a BMW vehicle, with license plates from Chiapas, when an armed group attacked him; with firearms. Losing control of the unit, it hit a tree. Elements of the Specialized and Municipal Police and later state experts and prosecutors arrived at the scene.

The Prosecutor's Office assured that it will find those responsible for this homicide and promised to bring them before the Public Ministry.

Paudal.com has the story here: [Raphael Tunesi](#)



Raphael Tunesi was the owner of the Quinta Chanabnal boutique hotel, he was also an epigrapher and an expert on the Maya culture. He is also the author of the book *El Arte Maya*. ■



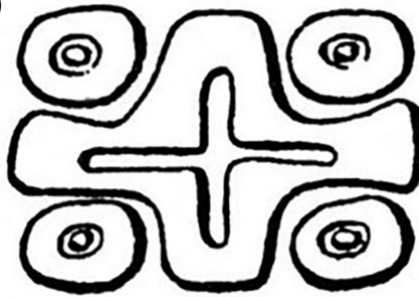
Aztlander Scholarly Focus: Michael Ruggeri

The Venus Symbol in Southwest Rock Art

The Maya symbol for Venus (Lamat)

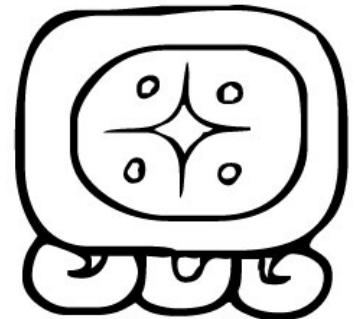
In 1996, the great John B. Carlson wrote a paper titled "Transformations of the Mesoamerican Turtle Carapace War Shield, A Study in Ethnoastronomy", that looked at war shields from Mesoamerica and the American Southwest. A common subject for the decoration of these symbols of conflict was the crucifix representing the planet Venus.

From Late Formative times in Mesoamerica, the planet Venus was viewed as a powerful male god of warfare and sacrifice. Carlson realized that Mesoamericans fought wars on the cycles of the planet. This



L) Maya glyph for Venus. R) Maya artifact: Tikal Turtle Carapace showing the Maya glyph for Venus, the 8th day Lamat). The war shield as the celestial symbol of Venus.

Venus-regulated warfare and sacrifice theme comes from various inscriptions and iconography, from Spanish chronicles and ethnohistorical sources, and from Precolumbian codices. Carlson noted a frequent portrayal of a turtle carapace used by a god or important persons, a shield.



Lamat, the Maya Day Sign, the 8th Day; Venus.

The planet Venus was viewed as a powerful male god of warfare and sacrifice whose rays were feared as deadly spears, particularly when the planet appeared in the east before sunrise as Morning Star or in the west after sunset as Evening Star.

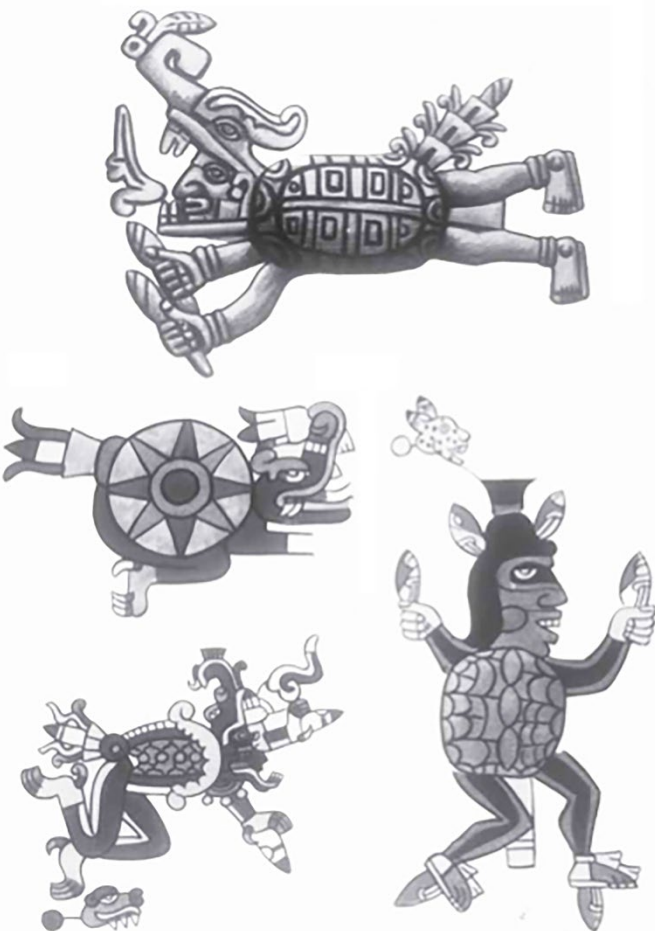
Nahua and Uto-Aztecanspeaking peoples may well have been the principal cultural agents who carried this cult of warfare and sacrifice north into the American Southwest and perhaps also into the Plains and Southeast.

From 900 CE in West Mexico, to 1200 CE in Northwest Mexico in the Casas Grandes region, and by 1300 CE in the American Southwest, the Venus symbolism spread. Among these changes in the American Southwest is the dramatic florescence of Morning Star and warfare-related symbolism in Pueblo rock art and kiva murals.

In the art and iconography of Mesoamerica, the depiction of plumed serpents in association with stars is widely interpreted as representing portrayals of Quetzalcoatl in his guise as the Morning Star, both being closely related to the dawn and the eastern directional point.

The Casas Grandes Cultural complex conveyed Mesoamerican related themes from

continued on next page



Four examples of the Mexican "Turtle-Xiuhcoatl Sacrificer" ("Yahui" in the Mixtec language). (a) Stucco representation from the wall of Tomb 1 of Zaachila, Valley of Oaxaca; (b) Mixtec Codex Vindobonensis, p. 30; © Mixtec Codex Zouche-Nuttall, p. 19; (d) the Selden Roll. "Xiuhcoatl" as the "Fire Serpent." After Caso (1964: Fig. 4).



Aztlander Scholarly Focus: Michael Ruggeri

The Venus Symbol in Southwest Rock Art

the site of Paquime in Chihuahua including the transmission of a Mesoamerican-derived Morning Star warfare complex to the American Southwest. Ballcourts, horned serpent imagery, and the cross-shaped architectural features at the Mound of the Cross all suggest possible manifestations of and links to the Quetzalcoatl-Venus complex.

The symbol of the outlined cross is commonly identified as a representation of Venus. In Mesoamerica it symbolized Quetzalcoatl in his aspect of the morning star and indeed the Mayan glyph for the planet Venus includes an outlined cross.

The rising of the Morning Star of Venus is symbolic of the rising of the creator from death to rebirth. The very same relationship exists between the Morning Venus and multi-named Native American creator gods. Mesoamerica researchers have been successful in identifying several Venus Star symbols which were used by the Maya, Toltec, and Aztec cultures to identify the Creator

One of the symbols used by these cultures to identify the rebirth of the creator Quetzalcoatl is an outlined cross. The Aztec creation god after being on earth, became a sky god who is seen in the Mexican iconographic system in both anthropomorphic and serpent form, and he is also symbolized by the Morning Star, often in the form of an outlined cross.



Johnson Canyon, Ute Reservation, Colorado.



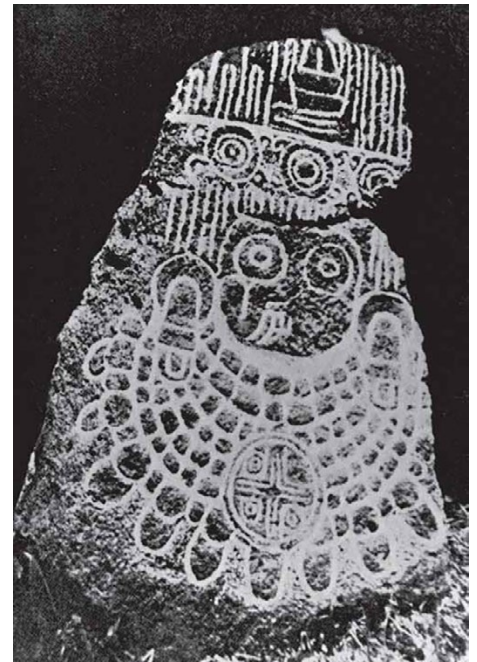
Aerial photograph of the cardinally-oriented quincunx-form mound group known as Unit 2 at Casas Grandes (Paquimé) in the state of Chihuahua which has long been associated with the Lamat glyph for Venus by Di Peso and others. (Di Peso, 1974: Vol. 2:409).



Red Rocks, Arizona.

The double Venus Star is found in several areas of northern Mexico and the American southwest. The twin Venus Star motif has survived among both the Hopi and Navaho people.

The double star as a Venus Star. The lower part represents the evening aspect to Venus as it sinks below the western horizon. The western aspect of Venus rep-



A Post-Classic rock carving in bas relief known as the "Piedra de Coatlán," State of Morelos, Mexico. The frontal figure displays the iconography of the fanged, goggle-eyed Storm God, Tlaloc, as well as the folded Trapeze-and-Ray headdress ornament above the Bar-and-Three-Dots symbol, all diagnostic of the cult of Venus-regulated warfare. In this case, the figure may actually be a female Water Goddess, based on the diagnostic multiple strands of beads. After Robelo (1912: Lámina 3) and Krickeberg (1969: Tafel XXVII, Abb. 62).



Red Rocks, Arizona.

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Aztlander Scholarly Focus: Michael Ruggeri

The Venus Symbol in Southwest Rock Art

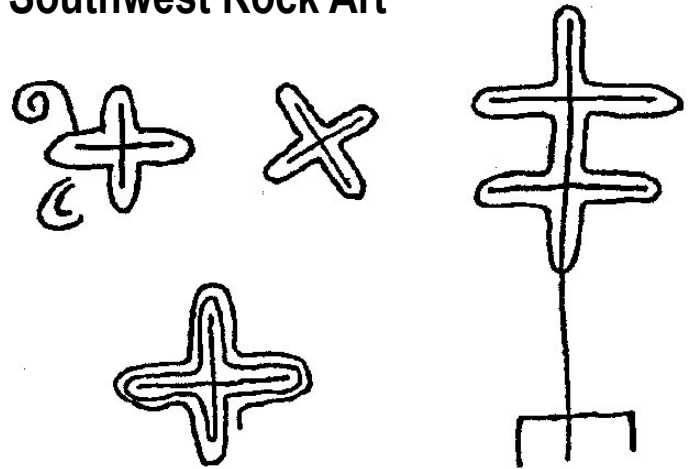
resents the death of the creator as he goes “into the underground.” The upper part represents the return of Venus after being “underground” for 8 days. The beauty of the rising Morning or Dawn star represents the rising of the creator from his death in the underworld to the newness of life – a rebirth or resurrection of the creator.

This same interpretation of a similar Venus star is traceable back to Mesoamerica and the death and rebirth of Quetzalcoatl, the Sky God of Creation.

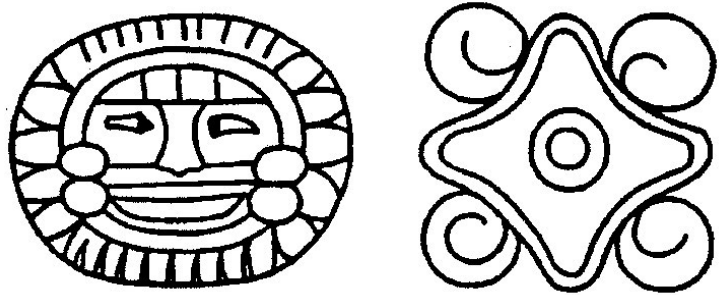
In some of the legends of the ancestors of the Aztec, Quetzalcoatl is represented by the Morning Star, while his twin brother Xolotl is represented by the Evening Star. Together they symbolize the passage of Venus into the underworld in the evening, and then its emergence again into the Eastern sky in the morning.

EL Tacomate

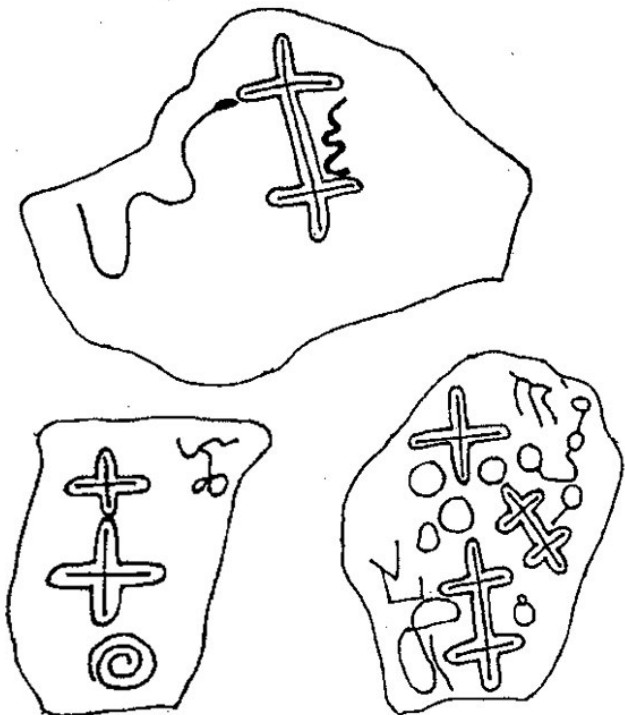
At this site we see examples of both the single and double Venus Stars which are almost identical to those we see along the Colorado and Gila Rivers. The major addition from the El Tecomate site is the use of a speech scroll which extends from the outlined cross in above



Examples of single and double Venus Star symbol of Quetzalcoatl from El Tecomate, Sinaloa, Mexico (Patterson 1992:76, after Ortiz de Zarate 1976:61-62).



This face, symbolizing the Fifth Sun or Quetzalcoatl, alternates with the sign of Venus (right) to frame a door in one of the palaces at the huge temple complex at Teotihuacan (Sejourné 1976:90).



Three petroglyph panels at the North Kofa Site (Kofa Game Reserve, Arizona) with varieties of the single and double Venus Stars.

right. This speech scroll helps us identify the Venus Star as a person who speaks. The Venus Star figure found at Teotihuacan is known to represent Quetzalcoatl, and has four speech scrolls preceding from it. The El Tecomate and Teotihuacan illustrations leave little doubt that the Venus images of the Colorado River region are connected with those of Mexico. The regular and double Venus Star symbols are found all the way down into South America.

In conclusion, John Carlson asks the question of whether the association between Venus, rain, maize, and fertility is rooted in the ancient mythic/cultural tradition of the transformation of blood into water via Venus-linked war and sacrifice, or whether there is an astronomical/calendrical basis for these beliefs – or both? In general, in Mesoamerica and in the cosmologies of West Mexico and the American Southwest, stars are feared, regarded as dangerous, and their association with conflict is pervasive.

Check out this slide show of this symbolism in Mesoamerica and the Southwest: [Venus Rock Art](#) ■



Noteworthy Posts in the News: South America

Chan Chan: Wooden Sculpture of the Chimú Culture Found in Peru

(Translated from Spanish)

A group of researchers from the Chan Chan Archaeological Complex Special Project (Pecach) of the Ministry of Culture of Peru, found a wooden sculpture with quite particular characteristics belonging to the Chimú culture.

From the archaeological center of Chan Chan, considered the largest mud city in America, located in northern Peru, this cultural piece of great relevance for pre-Hispanic studies of that region was found.

The piece of wood, 47 centimeters long by 16 centimeters wide, represents a human figure with a trapezoidal-cut cap decorated with seven vertical bands of alternating light and dark colors.

According to a release of the press of the Ministry of Culture of that country, the finding was in the Takaynamo huaca, associated with the Chimú culture, which lived between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries in northern Peru, which currently occupies the province of Trujillo, in the northern department of La Libertad.

"Chimú wood carvings or sculptures are fixed or mobile. The former are documented at the entrance to some walled complexes of Chan Chan, from an uncarved segment that, when



Of the wooden sculpture "The face is flat, oval cut and painted red. The nose, with a straight profile, stands out from the plane of the face. The almond-shaped eyes and circular ears exhibit unevenness, where a black resin is preserved that would have served to fix mother-of-pearl plates", the Chan Chan researchers reported

buried, fixes the carved portion of the element to the ground. The mobile sculpture lacks such an element and has frequently been documented in some huacas", said archaeologist Arturo Paredes Núñez. With their capital at Chan Chan, the Chimú were the largest and most prosperous culture of the Late Intermediate Period and the second largest empire in the history of the ancient Andes.

California18.com has their full report here: [Wooden Sculpture of the Chimú Culture](#) ■



The Maya World Illustrated with artist Steve Radzi

Steve Radzi has been illustrating Maya sites for many years. In 1995, his original black & white illustrations were exhibited at the IMS Conference at the Science Museum in Miami. In recent times, Steve has colored them, bringing them to life. These illustrations have not been published before. We shall feature his work in this and upcoming issues. Enjoy. You may visit Steve's site for more of his work. www.mayavision.com

XLAPAK: "Xlapac" or Old Stone Walls (600–900 CE) Xlapak is a small site and consists mainly of one building known as the "Palace". Located in the heart of the Puuc region, it is about 2.5 miles from the archaeological site of Labna and a similar distance from Sayil, lying directly between the two sites. Xlapak is found on the "Ruta Puuc" along Highway 261 and is an easy journey from Merida. ■



Noteworthy Posts in the News: Maya

Rescuing Ancient Maya History from the Plow, by Archaeologist Lisa Lucero

Anthropology professor Lisa Lucero and her colleagues are working to capture the history from Maya ruins before they are plowed under.

Things have changed since I was last in Belize in 2018, when I excavated the ancestral Maya pilgrimage site Cara Blanca. Thousands of acres of jungle are gone, replaced by fields of corn and sugarcane. Hundreds of ancestral Maya mounds are now exposed in the treeless landscape, covered by soil that is currently plowed several times a year.

Many non-Maya actually focus their farming efforts on sites with lots of mounds because they know the ancestral Maya chose the best soils. Before the Spanish Conquest of the 1520s, generations of Maya built their homes again and again on the same locations. I've excavated residences where Maya families had lived for 800 years or more. These places yield layer upon layer of stories. Consequently, each time farmers plow, they erase a generation or more of history, cultural heritage and knowledge.

To live in this region for thousands of years, the Maya had to develop sustainable relationships with local water sources, forests and soils. I want to know what we can learn from their experience and knowledge that is relevant for our own sustainable future.



Liza Lucero working in the field. Photo by C. Taylor.
© 2022 VOPA and Belize Institute of Archaeology, NICH.

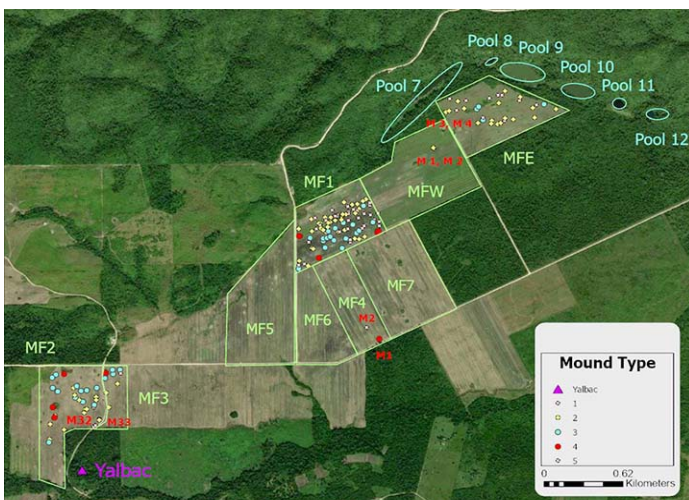


What once was jungle is now a treeless expanse of farm fields. Photos from 2010 and 2014.
© 2022 VOPA and Belize Institute of Archaeology, NICH.

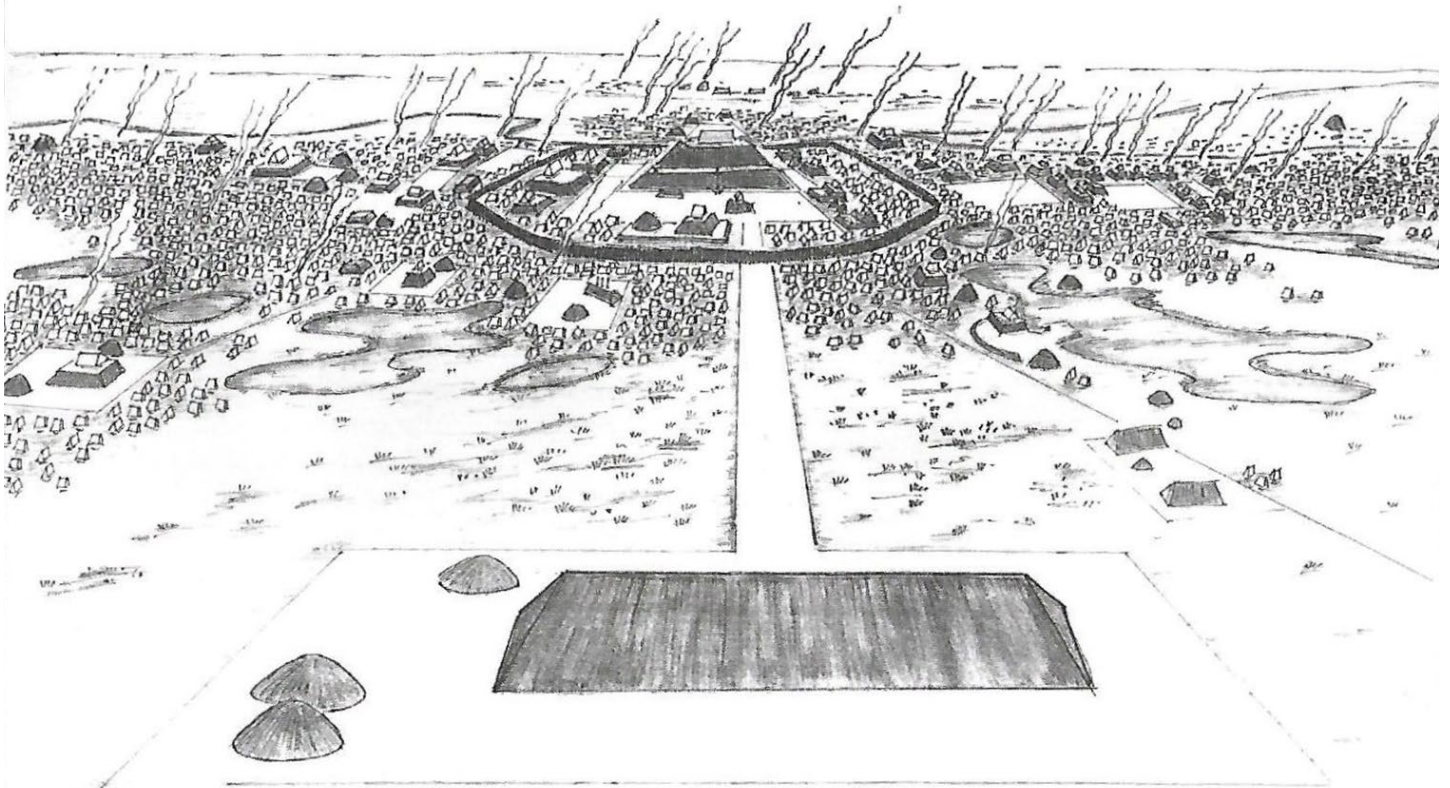
Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I was awarded a three-year National Science Foundation grant to conduct a salvage archaeology project here in Belize. The goal is to collect as much information as possible before the mounds are plowed away. My colleagues and I lost two seasons to the pandemic. I don't want to think about how much history we lost. We just have to move forward.

With permission from the Belize Institute of Archaeology and farmers from Spanish Lookout, a modernized Mennonite town, we are excavating as many mounds as we can. I'm having to learn about "plow archaeology" and, even more challenging, how to interpret the architecture that has been plowed. We are just beginning to scratch the (plowed) surface.

The **University of Illinois** has the full story along with more images on their campus news bureau here: [Recusing Ancient Maya History](#)



Google map with mounds mapped in 2014 and 2016. White patches are unmapped Maya mounds.
© 2022 VOPA and Belize Institute of Archaeology, NICH.



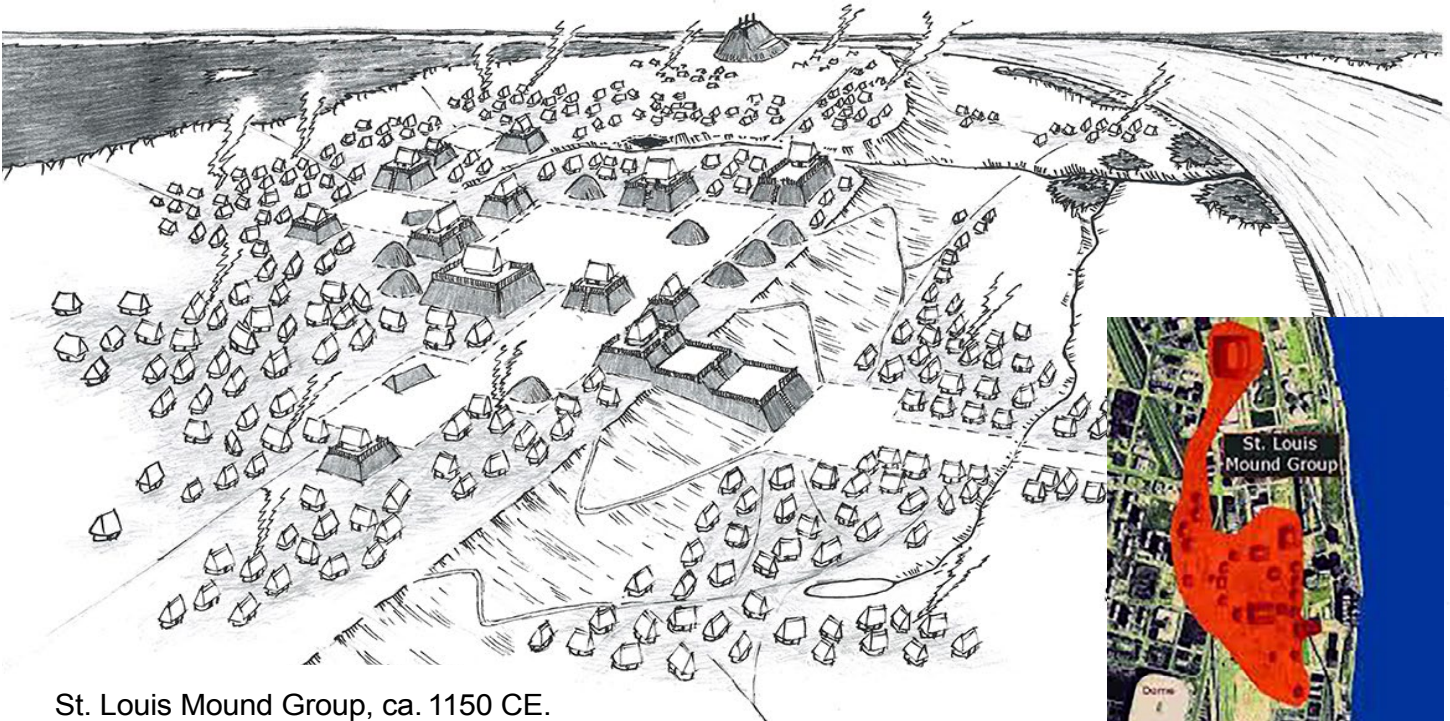
Reconstruction of Rattlesnake Mound, a ridge-top mound (in foreground) at the Cahokia Precinct.



***Aztlander Artistic Focus:* Glenn Baker**

Cahokia: “The Lost World I Discovered in My Back Yard”

“St. Louis is not just old – it’s ancient. A fact that makes it different from anywhere else. The St. Louis of today lies on top of the remnants of ancient Cahokia. How Important was it? Only Teotihuacan and Cholula in Mexico had bigger pyramid platforms. Hopefully for you, with these illustrations, Cahokia’s true importance has been recognized” – Glenn Baker



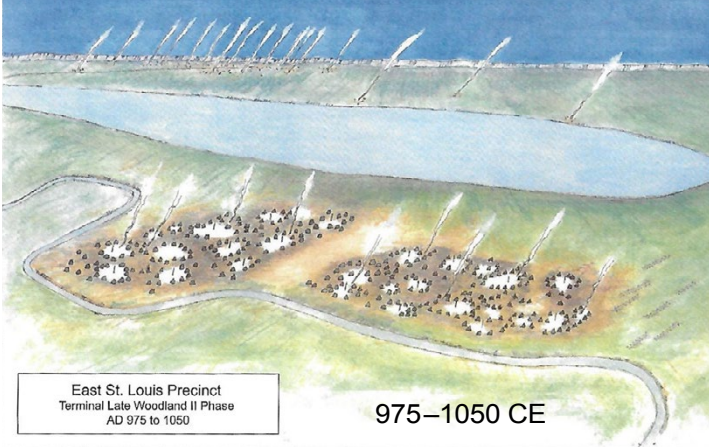
St. Louis Mound Group, ca. 1150 CE.

The Mound Group superimposed over today’s city.



Aztlander Artistic Focus: Glenn Baker

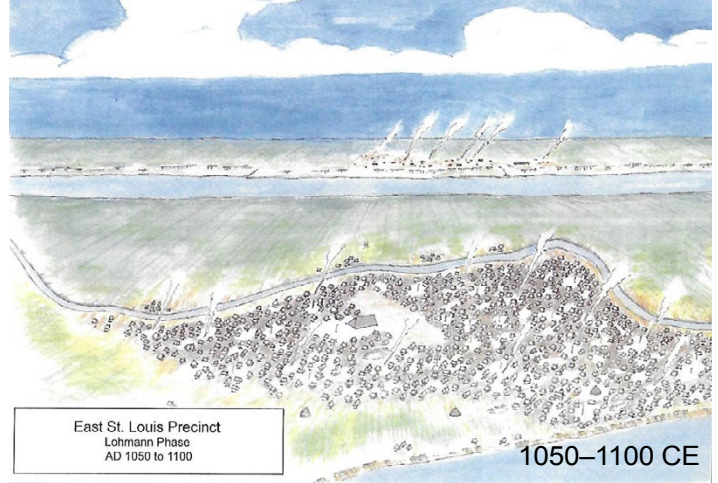
Cahokia: "The Lost World I Discovered in My Back Yard"



East St. Louis Precinct
Terminal Late Woodland II Phase
AD 975 to 1050

975–1050 CE

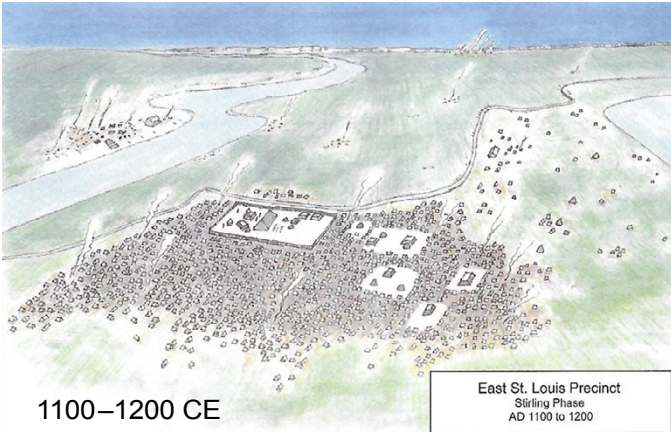
Depiction of Terminal Late Woodland II occupation of East St. Louis, view to east, looking toward Cahokia and the bluff line.



East St. Louis Precinct
Lohmann Phase
AD 1050 to 1100

1050–1100 CE

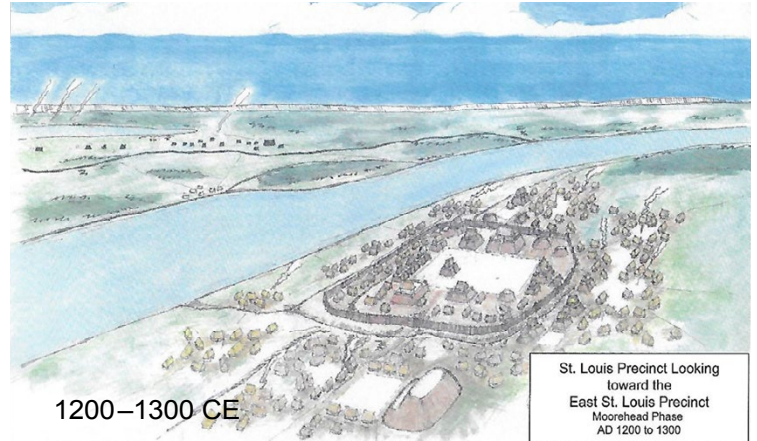
The Lohmann occupation at East St. Louis, view to west, looking toward the Mississippi River.



East St. Louis Precinct
Sterling Phase
AD 1100 to 1200

1100–1200 CE

Depiction of the Sterling occupation at East St. Louis, looking north toward Mitchell Mounds with the St. Louis Precinct to the west.

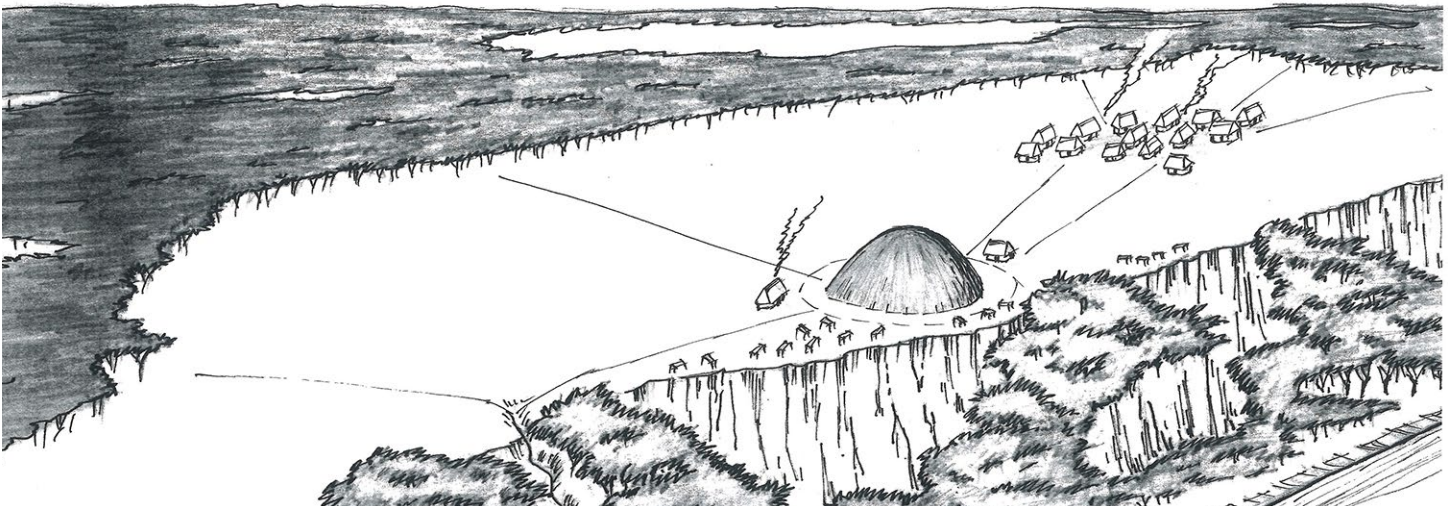


St. Louis Precinct Looking
toward the
East St. Louis Precinct
Morrehead Phase
AD 1200 to 1300

1200–1300 CE

Depiction of the Morrehead occupation at East St. Louis, in the distance, looking from the St. Louis Precinct in Missouri to the east.

Thomas Emerson and Tamira Brennan included my phases of East St. Louis in their important work "*Revealing Greater Cahokia: North America's First Native City*".



Glenn Baker's depiction of Sugar Loaf Mound, 1050 CE. See more of Sugar Loaf Mound on the next page.



Aztlander Artistic Focus: Glenn Baker

Cahokia: "The Lost World I Discovered in My Back Yard"

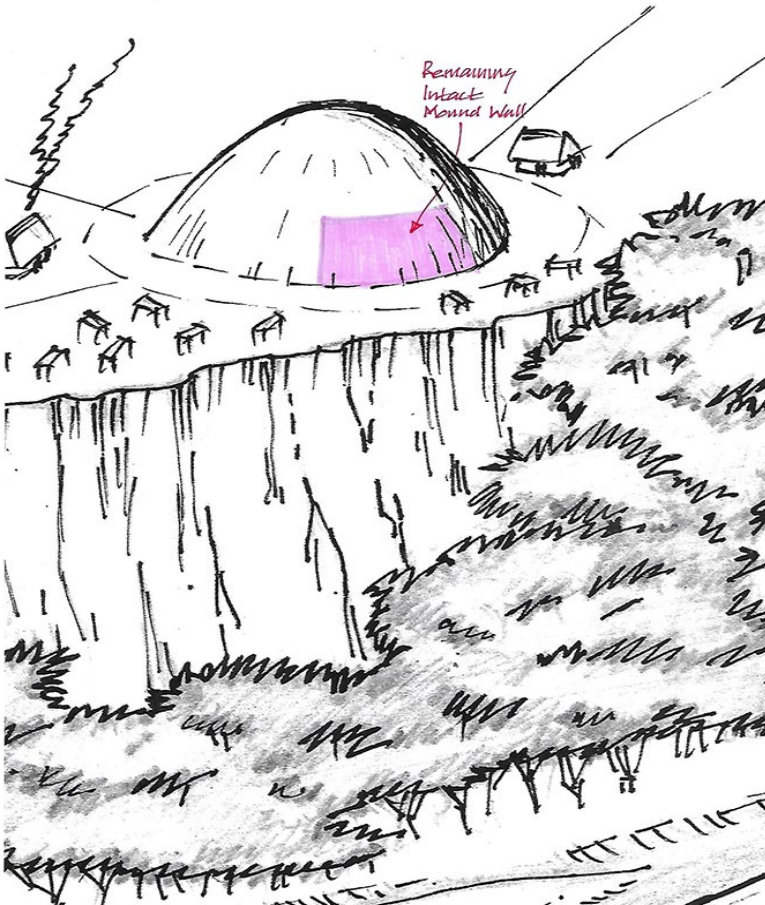


An 1818 sketch of Sugar Loaf Mound (Missouri Historical Society collection).



Photo: Glenn Baker.

The Osage tribe bought the property in 2009. Osage Nation Principal Chief Jim Gray described the purchase as "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."



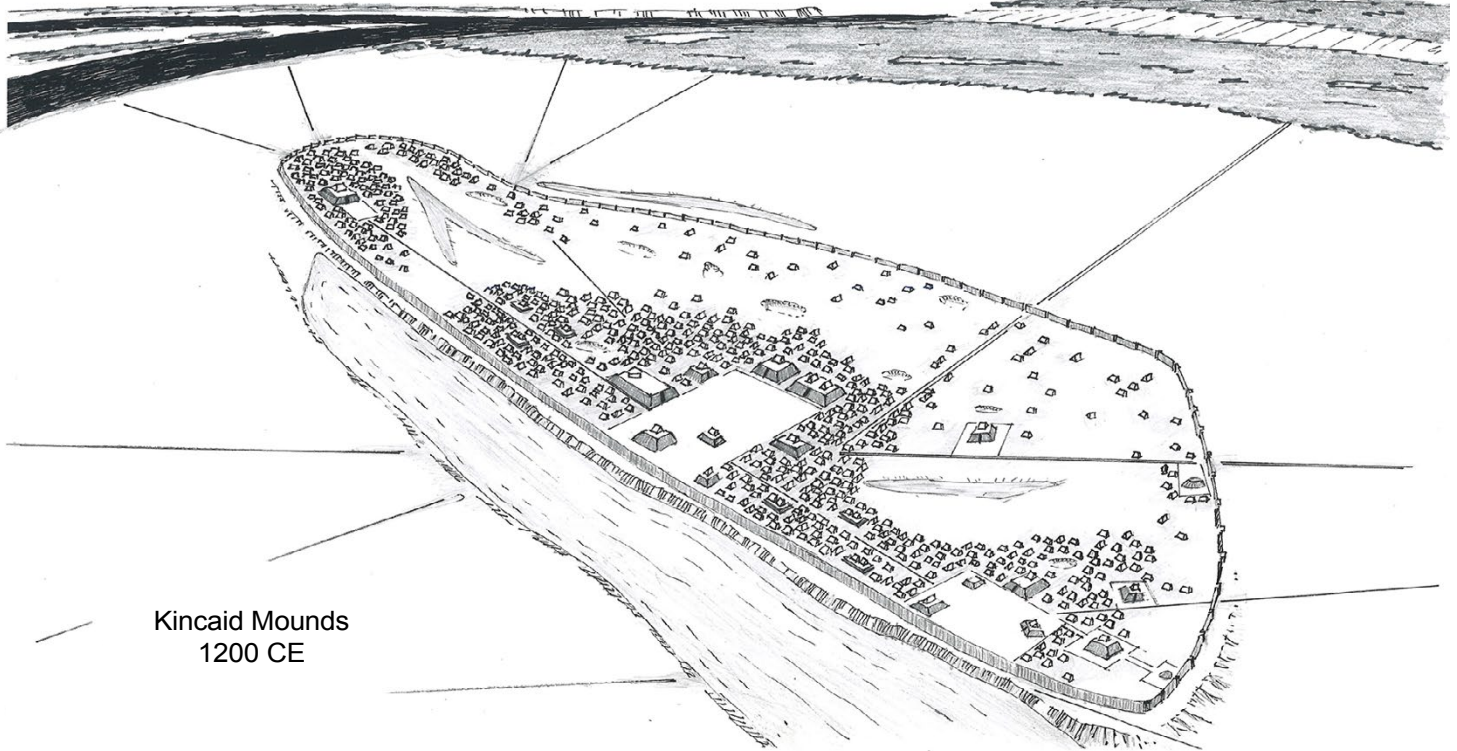
Two illustrations of where what remains of Sugar Loaf Mound in the photo by Glenn Baker comes from.

The Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site is an archaeological site directly across the Mississippi River from modern St. Louis, Missouri. It is the largest Precolumbian settlement north of Mexico. The site covers 890 hectares (2,200 acres), or about 9 square kilometers (3.5 square miles), and contains about 80 mounds, but the ancient city was much larger. It was occupied primarily during the Mississippian period (700–1400 CE), when it covered nearly 1,600 hectares (3950 acres) and included some 120 mounds. The mounds were named after the Cahokia tribe, a historic Illiniwek people living in the area when the first French explorers arrived in the 17th century.



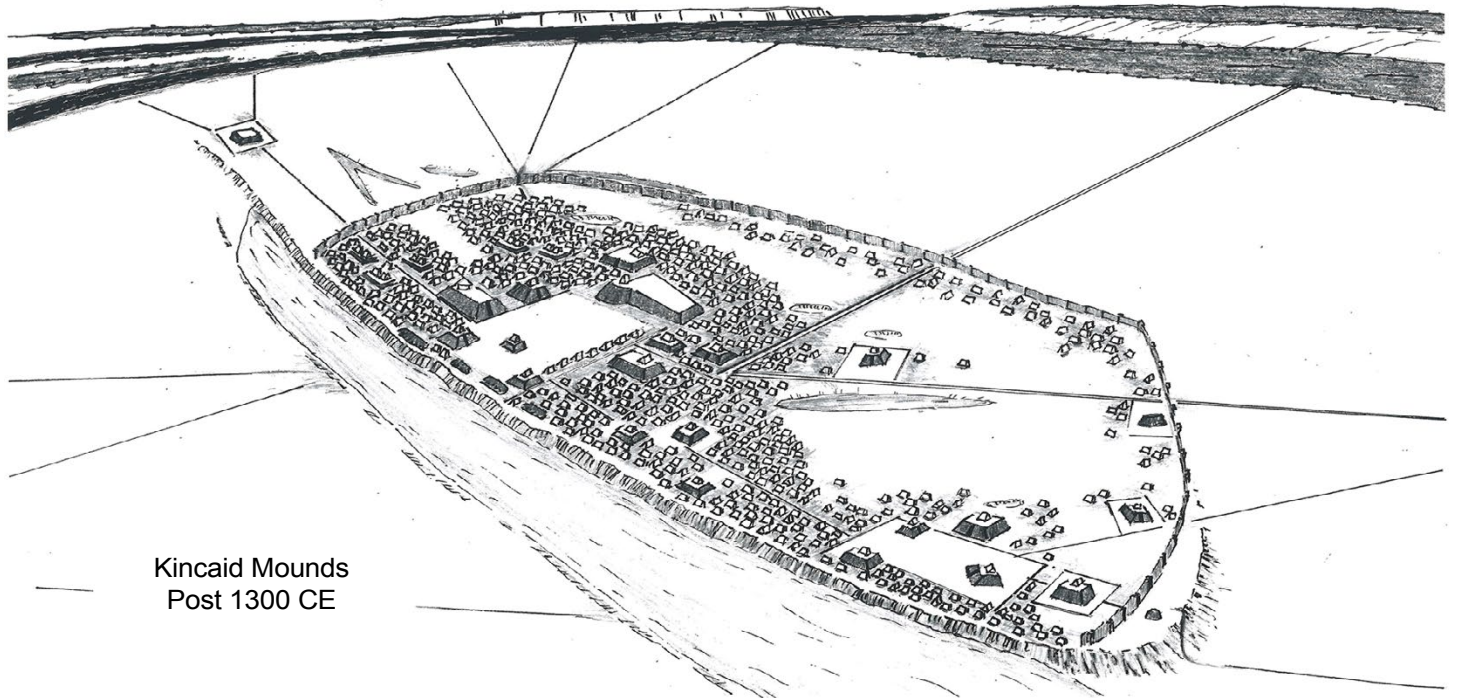
Aztlander Artistic Focus: **Glenn Baker**

Cahokia: “The Lost World I Discovered in My Back Yard”



Kincaid Mounds
1200 CE

Glenn notes: “I had the great pleasure of working with Tamira Brennan on illustrations of Kincaid Mounds for her dissertation”.



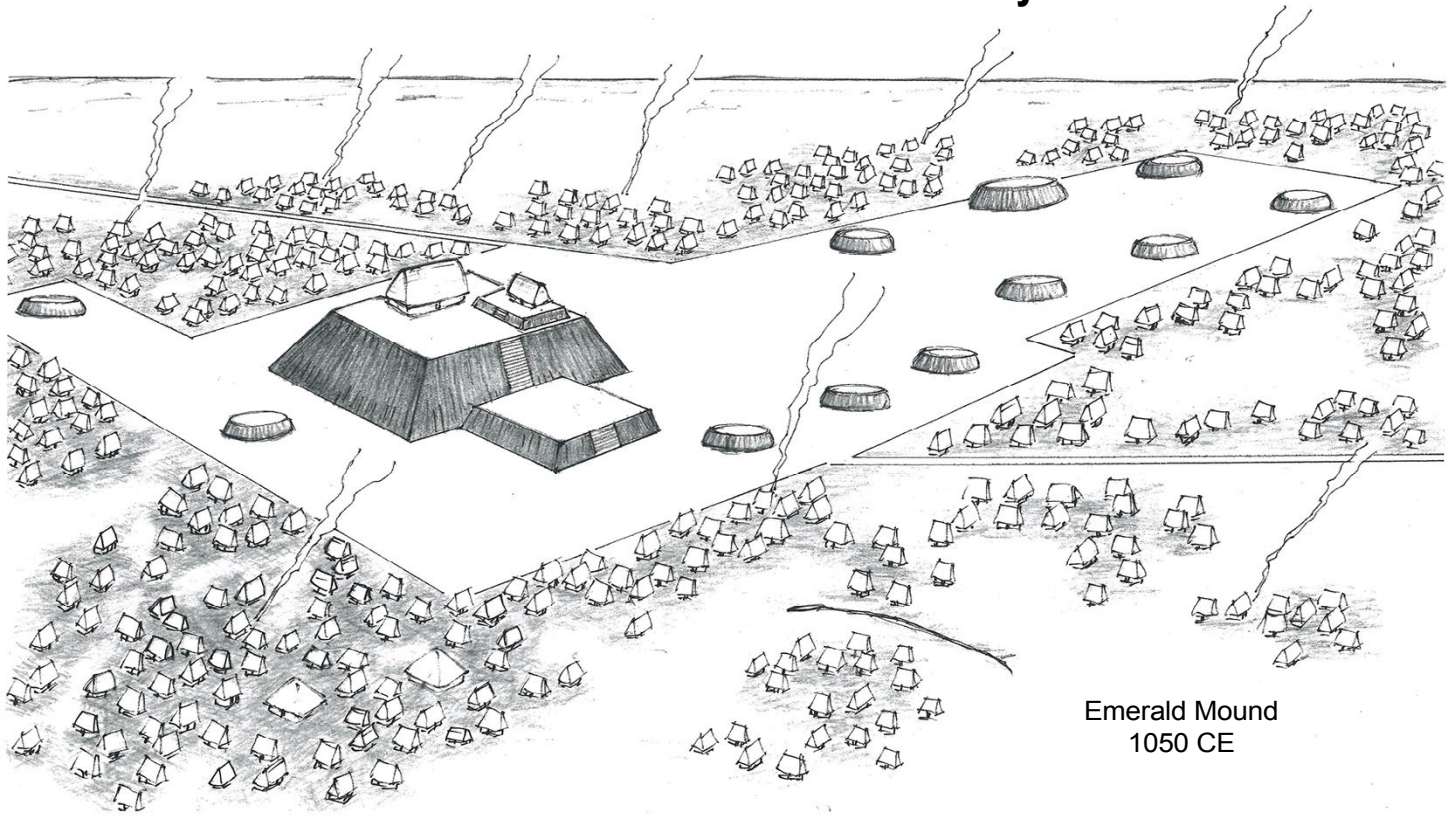
Kincaid Mounds
Post 1300 CE

Cahokia is a striking example of a complex chiefdom society, with many satellite mound centers and numerous outlying hamlets and villages. Established in 1979 the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site is a National Historic Landmark and a designated site for state protection. Cahokia Mounds was first protected by the state of Illinois in 1923 when its legislature authorized purchase of a state park. The Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1982.



Aztlander Artistic Focus: Glenn Baker

Cahokia: “The Lost World I Discovered in My Back Yard”



Emerald Mound
1050 CE

The Emerald Mound and Village Site (Emerald Site) is a Precolumbian archaeological site located near Lebanon, Illinois. It was an early and very important pilgrimage site east of Cahokia. The site includes five mounds, two of which have been destroyed by modern activity, and the remains of a village. Middle Mississippian peoples inhabited the village, which was a satellite village of Cahokia.

The largest of the mounds is a two-tiered structure that stands 50 feet (15 m) high. At the time of its discovery, the mound was the second-largest known in Illinois after Monks Mound at Cahokia. The site was added to the National Register of Historic Places on October 26, 1971. Glenn notes that Tim Pauketats has some exciting digs going on at Emerald Mound and the Village Site.

“I was inspired by Mark Leach along with the input of Tamira Brennan. Tim Pauketat, John Kelly, and Bill Iseminger, set off down the rabbit hole to try and visually create what some little looked at areas of ancient St Louis looked like – these pages of illustrations are what I came up with.

“The first time I saw Monks Mound was in 1965 on a 6th grade field trip. Back then, the place was totally messed up – a drive in – subdivision in the Grand Plaza a sketchy-looking pueblo-style museum at it’s base – it was the ultimate Route 66 roadside attraction – so mysterious, it seemed magical. Seeing Cahokia restored – I still look back to that first time I saw it – I knew it was a wonder of the world – and for a kid from a Lutheran school, I had to ask what god were these great temples raised up to? Now decades later – we know so much more”.

Thanks to Glenn Baker for these interesting, revealing, and important illustrations. ■

Nothing better than revisiting an important Aztlander zoom (513 views):

“Cahokia In the Real World” with Dr. Alice Beck Kehoe

This program was really informative and well worth your time to view.

Access this Aztlander zoom recording hyperlink: [Cahokia with Alice Kehoe](#)



Hidden Tunnels Discovered Beneath Chavín de Huántar Temple Complex

A network of hidden tunnels was discovered by a team of archaeologists beneath the 3,000-year-old Chavín de Huántar temple complex in the Peruvian Andes. The tunnels contain earlier forms of construction made by the Indigenous Chavín people that have not previously been observed.

The pre-Inca site was constructed by the Chavín people, originally from the Peruvian highlands, who first appeared in the Mosna Valley around 900 BCE and remained until roughly 250 BCE. Across the Ancash region, the complex once operated as a major religious and administrative hub.

In 2019, archaeologists from the the Chavín de Huántar Archaeological Research and Conservation Program at Stanford University in California began exploring these passages through a small duct with a robotic camera. Using this technology, they found a gallery and chamber with an object in the center. Studies were delayed, however,



The Chavin de Huántar Temple Complex beneath which the tunnels were discovered. Photo: Christian Vincés.

as a result of the pandemic. The passages would have been constructed between 1,200–200 BCE at 3,200 meters above sea level in the foothills of the Andes.

Additionally, the object seen in the 2019 survey was discovered to be a stone bowl with a three-dimensional carving of a condor head projecting from its side. The bowl and galleries would have been used for ceremonial purposes.

artnews.com has their report here:

[Tunnels Beneath Chavin de Huántar](#)

Wildfire Threatens Machu Picchu as Remote Location Hampers Efforts to Control the Blaze

Peruvian firefighters were fighting to contain a forest fire near the Incan ruins of Machu Picchu as the blaze threatened to close in on the ancient city in the Andean mountains.

The fire, which had engulfed an area about half the size of Vatican City, was started by farmers burning grass and debris to prepare to sow crops.

Machu Picchu, a complex of stone structures sitting atop a mountain, was built more than 500 years ago by the Incas, whose empire controlled large swaths of South America from what is today southern Ecuador to central Chile.

The fire's remoteness has hindered firefighters' efforts. "We have already been fighting the forest fire for two days and it has not been possible to get it under control, given the area is quite inaccessible," said Roberto Abarca, director of the Cusco risk management and



Wildfires rage close to Machu Picchu archaeological site This image is a screen capture from a short video posted online at: [Machu Picchu Fire Video](#)

security office. The breathtaking ruins, which have made the surrounding Cusco region Peru's top tourist destination, are considered one of the new seven wonders of the world.

theguardian.com has the original article here: [Wildfire Threatens Machu Picchu](#)



Upcoming Zoom and In-Person Events for July

Thursday July 7 • 4 PM MST

Crow Canyon Archaeological Center
Four Corners Lecture Series Zoom

“Ancestral Pueblo Fishing Strategies”
with **Dr. Jonathan Dombrosky**



It is commonly assumed that fishes were unimportant in the diet of past Pueblo people in the U.S. Southwest. Yet, small numbers of fish remains are consistently recovered from Late pre-Hispanic/Early Historic archaeological sites in the Middle Rio Grande of New Mexico. The end of drought conditions may have been one factor that impacted food choice and fishing decisions during this time.

To register, go here:

[Crow Canyon Ancestral Pueblo Fishing](#)

July 7 • 6-8 PM MST

Museum Exhibit Runs from July 7 to May 14, 2023

“When Rez Dogs Howl”
Opening Exhibit Reception
at **Pueblo Grande Museum and**
Archaeological Park, in Phoenix, AZ



“When Rez Dogs Howl” is a new body of work by Thomas “Breeze” Marcus. The exhibit explores the layers, complications, and duality of juxtaposing contemporary O’odham with traditional narratives and ancestral ties to the Phoenix Basin and throughout the Sonoran Desert. The exhibit was funded by the Friends of Pueblo Grande Museum.

For more information, contact Pueblo Grande Museum at 602-495-0901 or:

[When Rez Dogs Howl](#)

Friday, July 8, 7 pm ET • 6 pm CT Pre-Columbian Society of Washington D.C. Zoom

“Birds of the Sun: Scarlet Macaws in the pre-Hispanic U.S. Southwest and Mexican Northwest”
by **Christopher Schwartz**, PhD, Arizona State University

Access this zoom link to register: [Birds of the Sun Registration](#)

Exchange is a fundamental human behavior. While today, people rapidly exchange goods and information over great distances, in the past, long-distance exchange necessitated the mobilization of vast networks of interaction. Vibrantly colored scarlet macaws, which are native to the gulf coast of Mexico and Central and South America, are among the most engaging and challenging of objects to have been transported through these networks over hundreds of miles. This talk explores the long-distance acquisition, circulation, and use of scarlet macaws in the pre-Hispanic U.S. Southwest and

Mexican Northwest, including the reasons for procuring these multifaceted animals, their significance in processes of placemaking and widespread social transformations, and their continued importance to descendant communities in this region.

Christopher Schwartz is a senior staff scientist at Environmental Planning Group (EPG) and a visiting researcher at Arizona State University, where he earned his Ph.D. in Anthropology in 2020. He is an anthropological archaeologist who examines the social impacts of long-distance exchange & long-term human-animal relationships in pre-Hispanic North America. He draws on various lines of evidence, including faunal skeletal material, isotopic analyses, material culture, Indigenous perspectives, & spatial analyses, to understand how interregional interaction & human-animal relationships effected large-scale social transformations in the past. He is also the lead editor of *Birds of the Sun*.





Upcoming Zoom and In-Person Events for July

July 8 • 3 PM Arizona/Mountain Standard Time

Richard Elías-Mission Library Free
Presentation in Tucson, AZ

“More than Pocahontas and Squaws: Indigenous Women Coming into Visibility” with Laura Tohe

This visual presentation shows how Indigenous American women have contributed service to Arizona and the US, yet were stereotyped in films and remain invisible in the media. Nevertheless, they have been honored in all areas of public service – law, medicine, literature, military and activism. Among some traditional tribal cultures, women’s lives are modeled after female heroes and sacred women who exemplify and express courage and kinship values. This talk presents cultural aspects of Indigenous culture and how women have contributed in significant ways, not only to their tribal nations, but to contemporary American life.

For more information contact the library
at 520-594-5325.

July 9-December 10, 9 AM-Noon CT

at the Gault archaeological site, Florence, TX

“Guided Tours of the Gault Site”

The Gault School of Archaeological Research (Austin, Texas) offers guided tours of the Gault archaeological site in partnership with the Bell County Museum and the Williamson Museum. Gault, about 40 miles north of Austin, Texas, has produced evidence of almost continuous human occupation starting at least 16,000 years ago, making it one of the earliest reliably dated sites in North and South America. \$10

For more information and reservations contact the
Bell County Museum at 254-933-5243 or
museum@bellcounty.texas.gov or the
Williamson Museum at 512-943-1670 or
arobisheaux@williamsonmuseum.org

July 9, 11 AM Arizona/Mountain Standard Time

Amerind Museum, Dragoon, AZ

“Casas Grandes Clothing and Identity” with archaeologist Christine S. VanPool, PhD

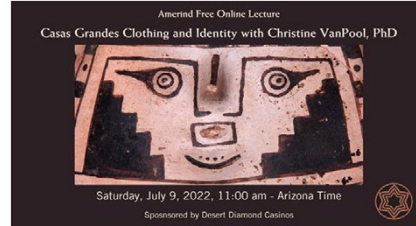


Illustration
courtesy of
the Amerind
Museum.

Medio period Casas Grandes human effigy pots portray males and females in different stances and types of clothing. These variances reflect aspects of Casas Grandes gender roles, identity, and ritual. Dr. Christine VanPool, who has written extensively on Casas Grandes and southwestern archaeology, iconography, religion, and archaeological method and theory, will examine these differences and provide insights into Casas Grandes culture.

To register, go to:

[Casa Grandes Clothing and Identity](#)

July 11, Daily July 11-25

Caddo Mounds State Historic Site, Alto, TX

“Rebuilding Koo Hoot Kiwat (Caddo Grass House)”

This project’s sponsors have been busy gathering building materials including switch grass, pine poles, and willow branches, to construct a new grass house at Caddo Mounds State Historic Site.

Volunteers with the
pine pole frame
of the 2016
Caddo Mounds
grass house; photo
by Curtis Craven.



To volunteer, contact the Friends group at:
easttexasfriendsofcaddo@gmail.com



Thursday, July 14 • 12 PM PDT

Sponsored by Indigenous Education Institute (IEI), Friday Harbor, Washington

“A Sense of Place: Indigenous Perspectives of Earth, Water and Sky”

Washington State Poet Laureate Rena Priest (Lummi Nation) gives this
12th webinar presentation in IEI’s “A Sense of Place” series.

To register, go to: [Indigenous Perspectives of Earth, Water and Sky](#)





Upcoming Zoom and In-Person Events for July

Thursday, July 14 • 7 PM CT

North Texas Archeological Society (NTAS),
Online and In-Person, Free

“Hueco Tanks: A Natural and Cultural Oasis in the Chihuahuan Desert of Far West Texas”

by archaeologist **Tim Roberts**



Photo of
Tim Roberts
courtesy of NTAS.

Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site east of El Paso is centered on four massive hills more than 400 feet above the surrounding desert floor. The availability of water, as well as shelter and the resources for tool making, food processing, cooking, and other day to day activities, has drawn people to Hueco Tanks for nearly 11,000 years and has resulted in an unbroken archeological record of human occupation that represents every known cultural-historical period in the region from Early Paleoindian to Historic.

To request Zoom link or for more information, send an email to: info@ntxas.org

Wednesday, July 20 • 8 PM ET

Institute of Maya Studies Live-Streaming Event

“Quetzalcoatl and the Dresden Codex Venus Table”

with **Gerardo Aldana**, PhD,
University of California, Santa Barbara



The Preface of the
Venus Table of the
Dresden Codex.

In this presentation, I offer a new interpretation of pages 29 through 54 of the Borgia Codex and how they speak to a complex interweaving of astronomy and politics during the Terminal Classic and Postclassic periods across Mesoamerica. *Please plan on attending!*

Access and bookmark this active hyperlink to join the event:

[Quetzalcoatl and the Dresden Codex](#)

July 18, 7-8:30 PM Arizona/Mountain Standard Time

Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society (AAHS)

“Lived Lives: Individuals in Mimbres Pithouse and Pueblo Communities”

with archaeologist **Barbara J. Roth**, PhD



Photo of
Dr. Barbara Roth
courtesy of AAHS.

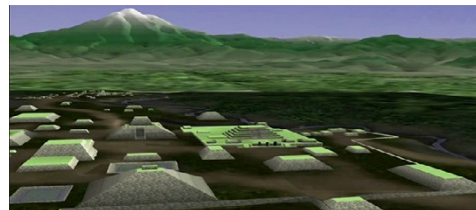
In this presentation, Dr. Barbara Roth will use data from excavations at two pithouse sites, La Gila Encantada and Harris, and the pueblo site of Elk Ridge to highlight individuals who lived at these sites. She will discuss the information she and her colleagues used to determine their presence and how thinking about individuals in the past can help us further explore the dynamics of communities in the past.

To register, go to: [Lived Lives with BJ Roth](#)

Monday, July 25 • 8 PM ET • 7 PM CT

Aztlander Free Live-Streaming Event

“The Izapa Restoration Project Utilizing Virtual Reality and 3-D Animation” featuring **Dennis R. Lisonbee**



In the final decade of the previous millennium, archaeologist V. Garth Norman and filmmaker Dennis R. Lisonbee began exploring emerging digital 3-D animation technology to restore the Izapa Temple complex in virtual reality. In 2020, breakthroughs in virtual reality gaming technology opened a new door to restoring the Izapa Temple Complex and we will hear of the progress to date to digitally restore the ancient site that scholars believe was ground-zero for the initiation of the Maya calendars.

Access and bookmark this active hyperlink to join the event:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81340762300>



Looking Towards the Future: Our Upcoming Aztlander Zooms

Monday, August 29 • 7 PM CST • 8 PM EST

Our **August** zoom event will feature **Mike Ruggeri** with a program titled:
“Mesoamerican Influences on Southwest Rock Art”

Mesoamerican influence began to filter into the American Southwest as early as 300 CE and continued to play a role in the cultures of that area right up to the Conquest.

Mesoamerican architectural concepts, religious concepts, iconography, and world views found their way into the Southwest by way of long distance trade in scarlet macaws, cacao, copper bells, pyrite, shell trumpets, and ornaments from Mesoamerica. These trade items were accompanied by major religious themes and beliefs that included major Mesoamerican deities such as Tlaloc the rain god, the plumed serpent Quetzalcoatl, the Venus symbolism connected to warfare and duality, the Hero twins.



These major religious themes found their expression in the Southwest in pottery, in religious ritual, and in the rock art of the Southwest.

Mike Ruggeri will take you on an illustrated tour showing the influence of these Mesoamerican deities and religious concepts in the rock art of the Southwest which stretches across a vast area through Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and the Four Corners region of the Southwest. *Y'all know Michael; he's one of the bestest!*

Monday, September 19 • 7 PM CST • 8 PM EST

Our **September** zoom event will feature **Nicholas Hellmuth** with a program titled:
“The Tomb of the Jade Jaguar”

Dr. Nicholas M. Hellmuth had beginner's luck to discover one of the most richly stocked royal burials of the entire ancient Maya realm. He accomplished this while still a student at Harvard, while working on the University of Pennsylvania archaeological project at Tikal, Guatemala. It is rare that an archaeologist has an opportunity to find the burial chamber of one of the great kings of an ancient civilization. *This will be really special!*

Monday, October 10 • 7 PM CST • 8 PM EST

Our **October** zoom event will feature **Mark Van Stone** with a program titled:
“Maya Mold Made: The Second-Most Popular Maya Art in Ancient Times (next to cooking!)”

In 2014, **Mark Van Stone** discovered a rich collection of 208 ancient Maya Molds in the Ruta Maya Foundation collection. Along the way, he has learned a great deal about the role played in Maya society by Maya figurines. You'll never guess! As he puts it, “Unlike all other Maya artworks, figurines were not just for the elites – They were accessible to everyone.

This compelling feature kept us going for all this time!” *Plan ahead to be there with us!*



Upcoming Zoom and In-Person Events for July

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center
Free online "Third Thursday Food for Thought"
July 21, 7-8:30 PM Arizona/Mountain Standard Time

"Ecological Knowledge and Practices of Traditional Indigenous and Spanish Agriculturists"

presentation by **Gary P. Nabhan, PhD**



Third Thursday
guest presenter
Gary Nabhan.

There were many food crops domesticated by Indigenous cultures in the region we now call Arid America in addition to those diffused from Mesoamerica. While corn, some beans, and squash did come north into what's now the US from Mesoamerica beginning over 4,000 years ago, quite a few others underwent much of their domestication in Arid America.

To register, go to:

[Ecological Knowledge and Practices](#)

Tuesday, July 26
7-8:30 PM Arizona/Mountain Standard Time

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center
free Zoom online program

"Indigenous Interests"

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center's Indigenous Interests presentation hosted by Martina Dawley (Hualapai-Diné), Anabel Galindo (Yaqui), and Maegan Lopez (Tohono O'odham). The guest speaker will be Ora Marek-Martinez (Diné), Ph.D., Director of the Office of Native American Initiatives and Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff.

To register for the program go to:

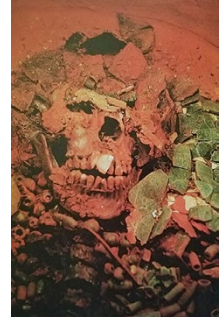
[Indigenous Interests](#)

Wednesday, July 27 • 8 PM ET • 7 PM CT

Institute of Maya Studies Live-Streaming Event
"Gazing at the Death Face": The Story Behind the Story of the Discovery of the Tomb of K'inich Janaab' Pakal

with **Elaine Schele, PhD**

Gazing at the Death Face. Image of Pakal's skull and death mask taken by Arturo Romano right after the tomb was opened.



It's a story of the trials and triumphs encountered during archaeological excavation work including the qualities of friendship, trust, and scholarship between individuals and agencies. On the other hand, the story reveals moments of frustration, mystery, ineptitude and mistrust among those same persons and institutions – qualities that illuminate the fallibility of human nature.

I hope you will join us!

Access and bookmark this active hyperlink to join the event:

[Gazing at the Death Face with Elaine Schele](#)

July 29 • 7:30 PM CT • Fermilab Zoom Webinar

"Seeing Inside a Maya Pyramid"

by **Mark Adams, PhD**

Mark Adams is an emeritus professor at the University of Illinois Chicago, and part of the Fermilab Office of Education and Public Engagement, bringing cosmic ray experiments to high school students through QuarkNet.

Register here; Free; the Zoom link will be sent to you shortly before the event:

[Seeing Inside a Maya Pyramid](#)



Image courtesy of School for Advanced Research

July 31 • 10 AM – 5 PM MT

School for Advanced Research and the Vilcek Foundation

"Grounded in Clay: The Spirit of Pueblo Pottery"

A traveling exhibition opening at the Museum of Indians and Culture, Santa Fe, NM.

For more information contact SAR at 505-954-7200 or email: info@sarsf.org



Noteworthy Posts in the News:

Mesoamerica

Lidar Reveals New Data About the Size of Ancient Purépecha City in Michoacán

Researchers now have a fuller picture about the size of an ancient Purépecha city in Michoacán after using laser technology to detect structures hidden under vegetation and the ground.

Known structures at the Tzintzuntzan site near Lake Pátzcuaro numbered in the dozens before National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) researchers detected more than 1,000 using the laser surveying method known as lidar (light detection and ranging).

“To date, we have identified more than 1,000 archaeological elements in an area of 1,075 hectares,” INAH researcher José Luis Punzo Díaz said earlier this year.

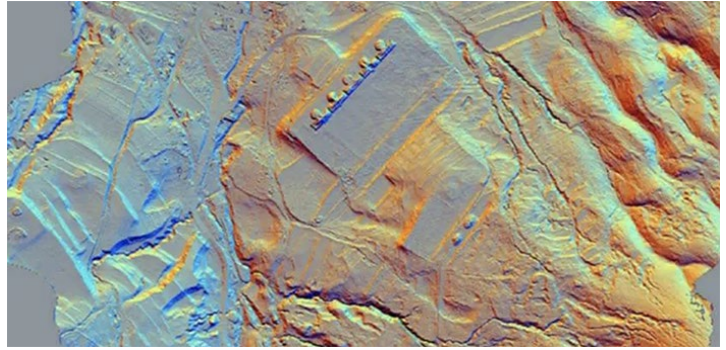
“We went from knowing of a few dozen monuments to more than a thousand in these first kilometers we’ve explored,” said the head of the lidar project, which began in 2021 and is supported by the United States-based National Center for Airborne Laser Mapping and NASA.

Lidar technology, satellite images and digital mapping models have together given researchers “a more complete image of this ancient city” Punzo said, explaining that the site – whose name means “place of the hummingbirds” in Purépecha – has been the subject of archaeological study by INAH for 90 years.

Among the structures detected at Tzintzuntzan – the capital of the vast Purépecha, or Tarasco, empire – via lidar are pyramids, terraces, platforms and residential dwellings, INAH said in a statement.

They are located “on the lower slopes of hills and near Lake Pátzcuaro, and not just in the area near the ritual zone as had been represented on site maps.”

Additional lidar surveys are expected to detect even more structures at Tzintzuntzan, located in the municipality of the same name.



Lidar-assisted image of part of the ancient Tarascan city of Tzintzuntzan in Michoacán, showing the site’s buried structures.

“This project is going to be very important,” Punzo noted. “I can say that [what we’ve found so far] is the tip of the iceberg. Lidar is the base to study the city in the coming decades. We knew almost nothing about Tzintzuntzan apart from its central area.”

Lidar uses lasers to map areas, from the air or from handheld devices.

mexiconewsdaily.com has their full article here: [Lidar Reveals New Data](#)

Join the Aztlán Listserv!

Michael Ruggeri invites you all to join the listserv “Aztlán”. Aztlán has been around for well over two decades. Aztlán is one of the oldest and most respected listservs for the world of the Ancient Americas.

The moderators filter out ad hominem and science fiction archaeology.

If you would like to subscribe, send your request to Mike’s email address at this email hyperlink:

michaelruggeri@mac.com

You can always get zoom recording announcements here:

Ancient Americas Lectures on YouTube:

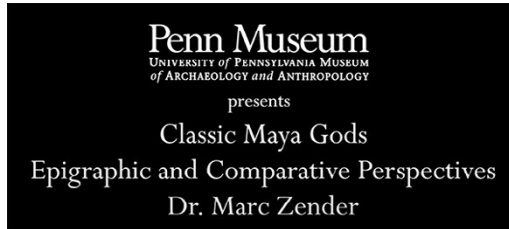
[Mike Ruggeri’s Ancient Americas Lectures on YouTube](#)



Important Videos on YouTube You May Have Missed

Penn Museum Video on YouTube

“Classic Maya Gods: Epigraphic and Comparative Perspectives” with Marc Zender



Penn Museum's Maya Weekend is one of the largest and oldest meetings in the United States devoted to Maya studies. Here, noted epigrapher **Marc Zender** shares what he has come to realize about the subject.

Click on this hyperlink to access the recording:

[Classic Maya Gods](#)

Submitted by Coyote Woman Mitzi Linn.

The City of Anderson, Indiana, presents:

“Adena/Hopewell Art” with 22,776 views on YouTube



featuring **Kelly Morgan** of the Interpretive Naturalist Mounds State Park. Hopewell art is characterized by an intricate use of positive and negative space, and mirror symmetry. The Moundbuilders' art was a confluence of 'ingenuity, industry, and elegance'.

Click on this hyperlink to access the recording:

[Adena Hopewell Art](#)

Submitted by Coyote Woman Mitzi Linn.

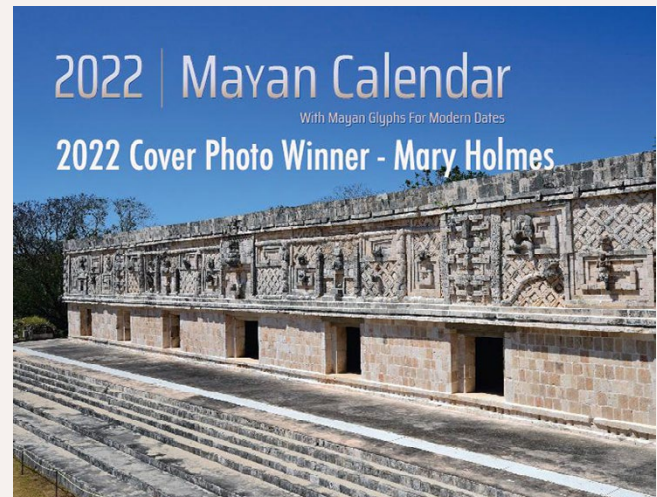
Announcing the **The Ninth Annual**

“Mayan Calendar Photo Contest”

Do you have a photo from the Mundo Maya that you're proud of? Submit it to our photo contest for chance to have it displayed as one of the twelve featured images of the **2023 Mayan Calendar!**

The contest runs through July 28th, 2022.

Winners get photo credit and three copies of the 2023 Mayan Calendar.



Contest Rules:

1. Photos must pertain to ancient Maya civilization - temples, stelae, artifacts, etc.
2. Only one entry per contestant. Send no more than one photo for consideration.
3. Digital format only - color photos, 200 dpi minimum resolution.
4. Landscape orientation photos only. Portrait orientation won't fit in the calendar.
5. If people appear in the photo, their permission must be assured.
6. Contestants must own the photo they submit without compromise.
7. Email your submittal only. Send no hard copies.

Entries accepted through July 28th, 2022. Good luck!

Submit entries to:

info@mayan-calendar.com

Mayan Calendar, LLC

www.mayan-calendar.com



Important Videos on YouTube You May Have Missed

Prepare yourself for Dennis Lisonbee's July 25 Aztlander live-streaming event by watching this 25-minute video about Izapa:

"Izapa Cosmogenesis"
with Aztlander Editor **Jim Reed**



The Maya Conservancy sponsors a new video by Jim Reed to explain the importance of helping to preserve and protect the site of Izapa, precession, sky canoes, and understanding why Izapa is where it's at; the ideal location for the initiation of the Maya calendars. Dedicated to Linda Schele. New, insightful info from V. Garth Norman, John Major Jenkins, and Jim Reed.

Click on this hyperlink to access the recording:
[Izapa Cosmogenesis](#)

Institute of Maya Studies Zoom Recording
"El Mirador, Dzibanche, and the Origins of the Snake Kingdom"
with Mayanist **Stanley Guenter**



This presentation reviews both the evidence and the interpretations that have been marshalled to make all these claims and whether more radical alternative interpretations may not only be warranted but even necessary. Stan Guenter has worked with several archaeological projects in Belize, Guatemala, Mexico, Cambodia, and in Europe. *Don't miss this!*

Click on this hyperlink to access the recording:
[Origins of the Snake Kingdom](#)



Live Streaming Events on YouTube Channels

Each of these names are hyperlinks to access the channels of your choice.
Click on them, and they will open for you in another browser window.

[**Ancient Americas**](#)

[**Amerind Foundation**](#)

[**ArchaeoEd Podcast**](#)

[**Archaeology Cafe**](#)

[**Archaeology Southwest**](#)

[**ArchaeologyTV**](#)

[**Arizona State Museum**](#)

[**Mark Van Stone**](#)

[**Peabody Museum Lectures**](#)

[**Penn Museum**](#)

[**School for Advanced Research**](#)

[**Smithsonian Native American Museum**](#)

[**Teotihuacan: City of Water, City of Fire**](#)

[**The Archaeology Channel**](#)

We hope that you have enjoyed this issue of ***The Aztlander!***

Feel free to contact us to leave your comments and suggestions for future issues.

The Aztlander is announced to thousands of Ancient Americas enthusiasts. If you would like to donate to sponsor an ad for your business or organization, remember we provide hyperlinks, so folks can immediately access your website for products, services, book sales, etc.